# Musical Education

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# MUSICAL EDUCATION

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# MUSICAL EDUCATION

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BY

ALBERT LAVIGNAC

PROFESSOR OF HARMONY AT THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

ESTHER SINGLETON

TRANSLATOR OF LAVIGNAC'S "MUSIC DRAMAS OF RICHARD WAGNER" AND AUTHOR OF "A GUIDE TO THE OPERA," "SOCIAL NEW YORK UNDER THE GEORGES," ETC.

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# PART I

## GENERAL REMARKS UPON MUSICAL EDUCATION

# MUSICAL EDUCATION

## PART I

## GENERAL REMARKS UPON MUSICAL EDUCATION

### I. Music a Language, an Art and a Science

Music is a Language.

Infinitely less precise than the most rudimentary of languages with regard to the subject treated, on the other hand, it possesses an intensity of expression and power of communicating emotion to which no spoken language can attain, however perfect it may be.

Like all other languages, it is composed of several dialects, *patois*, or jargons, it even has its slang; it has its rational and etymological orthography, its phonetic orthography and its whimsical orthography; we may therefore speak it more or less well, and write it more or less correctly.

"The study of the musical language is like that of all other languages. He who learns it in his infancy can become master of it, but at an advanced age, it is almost impossible to acquire it." *

* Rubinstein, *Aphorisms (Le Ménestrel*, 1900*)*.

Like all other languages, also, it can be taught in two ways, by practice and theory. It possesses its own special literature of an extreme richness and variety; the composer is an author of the same rank as the man of letters; the *virtuoso* singers and instrumentalists are interpreters like the reciter or reader; one makes use of words, the other of sounds, but their aim is the same,—to excite emotion, or, at least, to captivate the intellect. "Music is a sort of universal language which harmoniously relates all the sensations of life" (Mme. Cottin). Finally, also, like other languages, it constantly transforms itself by a slow and logical evolution, following the progress of civilization and corresponding to the needs of different periods and different countries.

Music is an Art.

The most subtle, the most ethereal and the most evanescent of all the arts; the architect moves blocks of stone; the painter fixes upon canvas, wood, stone, or paper, colours that will last for an unlimited time; even the poet finds in the words of his language the fixed and ready-prepared elements for his work. The musician alone seems to work in the void and with void; sonorities extinguished almost as soon as heard and of which nothing remains but a memory,—those are his materials; it is with such means that he must "charm the ear, interest the mind and sometimes elevate the soul," according to an old definition, which is not the worst for all that. The art, however, may be likened to poetry, for the composer plays with sounds as the poet plays with words; like poetry, also,

it is strictly bound by the laws of rhythm and consonance; like it, it addresses itself to the mind, the heart and the soul by means of the organ of hearing. It also has a strong resemblance to painting, because it possesses a particular colouring of the latter, which is orchestration; its form and line is the melodic contour; and the judicious balancing of the combinations resulting therefrom, which in the one, as in the other of the two arts, constitutes harmony.—It may, perhaps, be likened to architecture even more for those who can understand the important part played in music by the relative proportions of the various parts of a composition, whether they be of enormous or trifling importance, whether it is a question of a simple *song without words*, or an *oratorio*, a little dance air, or an opera in five acts. To consider music as the "architecture of tone," according to the saying of Mme. de Staël, is an absolutely correct conception: a symphony of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, or Saint-Saëns is a veritable tonal edifice, exactly as a monument such as the Parthenon in Athens, St. Mark's, Venice, or Westminster Abbey is a masterpiece of architectural harmony.

Music is a Science.

"There is no *art* without science: the whole race of masters proves this." *

It is even a science of mathematics in the highest degree, for, after all is said and done, all the elements and all the processes that go to make up a musical work find their explanation and their *raison d'être*

* Charles Gounod, *Étude sur les chorals de Bach* (Preface).

in numbers and in combinations of numbers. Unfruitful of herself and by herself, by strengthening Art and augmenting its productive power, " Science is a dial that marks the hour of the progress accomplished." *

*Rhythm*, whether it be reduced to its most simple expression or carried to extreme complexity, is nothing more than the division of time into equal or unequal, but always proportional fractions. *Intonation*, or the height of a sound, depends solely upon the absolute number of vibrations that produce the body of tone set in action for a given time. *Intensity*, the greater or less strength of tone, results from the fulness of those same vibrations, and from the violence with which they disturb the ambient air. The *timbre* (quality of tone) is the result of the individual conformation of the instrument by which the tone is emitted, and the subdivisions or harmonic sounds that accompany it.—The most masterly combinations of *harmony* and *counterpoint* are based upon the numerical relations that exist between different tones, from which springs the more or less accentuated sensation of consonance, dissonance, or discord, which the ear experiences, and which it enjoys, tolerates, or rejects.—Finally, for I think I have omitted nothing, everything may be reduced to figures, analysed and explained by the positive laws of acoustics and mathematics.

Music is then at once a Language, an Art and a Science, and should be considered, according to cir-

* Émile de Girardin.

cumstances, under one or other of these three aspects.

Language is of divine essence, for singing is as natural to men as is speech, or the simple cry; it is even quite reasonable to think that among the first human beings the cry and vociferation preceded articulate speech.

Art is the product of the human mind, always tending to ennoble, to poetize and idealize the materials furnished by nature.

Science, as cold and positive as Art is exuberant, appears here with its numbers and exact formulæ, as a salutary curb, or a pendulum charged with maintaining the equilibrium.

From Language is born Art, which could not exist without it, and which Science comes in her turn to explain, and prop up in some measure, by guiding her in her developments, and preventing her sometimes from wandering into dangerous and blind paths.

It is by inquiring into these ideas and others of a similar nature that we may best discover the best means to employ in order to undertake and pursue a musical education under healthful conditions,—a matter which is more difficult than is generally believed, and which should not be treated lightly.

## II. Amateur and Artist

Whether it is a question of acquiring the talent of an artist or an amateur, that is only one of degree, for in taking as an example the special career of a

lyric artist who has to be both singer and actor, really one does not know precisely where to place the barrier that separates the professional artist from him who gives his time to music for his own pleasure. The methods of study are obviously the same for both,—with some slight differences which will be shown in the course of this work,—since the final goal to be attained is nearly the same. Moreover, do we not see amateurs transforming themselves into militant artists every day, just as we see also professional musicians abandoning their too-ungrateful career to embrace some more lucrative one while still continuing to exercise the art merely for their pleasure or for that of those about them.

The advice that is to follow, the fruit of forty years' experience in teaching, in every degree and under all conditions, is therefore applicable to these two categories without distinction, just as it is to the different branches of the art of music,—composition, singing or instrumental virtuosity,—which any one may intend to follow at the beginning.

I say at the beginning, for it will often happen that the original plans will be modified by the force of circumstances, or by causes that are impossible to foresee before the day when they inexorably force themselves upon us, such as the lack of voice in the adult whose parents prematurely determined to make a singer of him, because he had a pretty voice as a child or "because everybody has one in the family." Do not laugh; that happens every day.

## III. Natural Aptitudes, Hereditary Talent and Early Influences

This very naturally leads me to point out the too frequent fault that, from the point of view of aptitude, consists in regarding the child as a sort of continuation of ourselves, and determining his career in accordance with that which we should like to have embraced and which we regret that we did not follow. Most certainly there exist cases of heredity in artistic disposition as in everything else: from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century we have been enabled to see the tribe of the Bachs peopling Thuringia, Saxony and Franconia with a host of artists of the first order, who, in order to preserve a kind of patriarchal bond among themselves, assembled once a year, sometimes at Erfürt, sometimes at Eisenach or Arnstadt, to the number of a hundred or a hundred and fifty. We may cite from antiquity the Hortensius, Curio, and Lysius families, in which the art of oratory was transmitted, even among the women; Æschylus, in whose family eight tragic poets are counted; and nearer our own time, the Vernets, painters, father and son, for three generations; Mozart, whose father played the violin; and Rossini, whose father played the horn,—at fairs!

Certainly we might cite others, but it would be just as easy to find contrary examples of children, entirely destitute of all artistic sentiment, whose father and mother were musicians; and, inversely, artists of

genius whose parents had never manifested the slightest inclination towards music. Moreover, there are a great number of great artists who pursued their musical studies against the will of their family: Berlioz, whose father, a doctor, wanted him to become a doctor like himself; Wagner, of whom his family had decided to make a painter, and who could only give himself up to music to the great distress of his family who did not believe in his vocation; * Handel, who was forced to work in secret; and Nicolo, Dalayrac and Chabrier were of this class.

Therefore, we must not make any rules at all; and it is distressing when people say to you: "Oh, if I ever have a son, I will make a musician of him, I should so much have liked to be one myself!" This most frequently ends (obstinacy entering into it) in imposing upon the poor little creature months and years of work for which he does not feel the slightest attraction, and which is to him a veritable torture. This can even be carried so far as to make him abhor music.

On the other hand, one thing which is of enormous importance in the future development of the intelligence of the child, in the present meaning, is his surroundings during his early childhood, the atmosphere which he breathes and the degree of musical cultivation possessed by those who are continually with him. At the risk of seeming paradoxical, I have no hesitation in saying that a nurse who cannot sing in tune, can spoil his ear forever; and what I advance

* Lavignac, *The Music Dramas of Richard Wagner.*

here is not so very extraordinary, if people will only notice that a child acquires and preserves, sometimes for his whole life, and always for a very long time, the characteristic accent of the country in which he was born, or the persons by whom he was brought up; and if after many years it happens that he loses it, there will always remain with him a propensity to recover it on the shortest stay in his native country.

"The Romans have taught us, by their application to the study of their language, what we should do to instruct ourselves in our own. With them, the children from the cradle were trained in the purity of language. This was regarded as the first and the most important care, after that of morals. This was particularly recommended to the mothers themselves, the nurses and the servants. They were warned to watch as far as it was possible, lest any vicious expression or pronunciation escape them, for fear that their first impressions might become a second nature to them which would be almost impossible to change afterwards." *

What therefore is there astonishing in the fact that the same phenomenon should be produced with regard to musical sounds? The baby who has never heard anybody sing in tune, will not be able to form an idea how to sing himself, so he will begin by singing out of tune; his ear, still in a state of formation, will become accustomed to, and in some measure attuned to that way of singing. Later, he will continue

* Rollin, *Traité des études.*

in this way, having no reason to do differently; and that is how false voices are produced.

"Man's education begins at his birth," said J. J. Rousseau; "the first habits are the strongest," writes Fénelon. Now, what are the first habits that a child can acquire? To walk badly, or to pronounce badly, since these are the first two things that he learns; and I add to sing badly, because he amuses himself quite as much with humming as in babbling syllables. Montaigne was of the same opinion, and was even more explicit. This is what he says: "I find that our greatest vices take their bent from our most tender infancy, and our chief government is in the hands of a nurse." I believe that this is sufficiently clear, at least unless one wishes to admit that to sing falsely, or to hear falsely, denotes a defect of conformation.

On this subject, I find a charming anecdote in Gounod's *Mémoires* and reproduce it textually: "My mother, who was my nurse, certainly made me swallow as much music as milk. She never fed me without singing, and I may say that I took my first lessons unwittingly and without having to pay that attention that is so painful in early years and so difficult to obtain from children. Unconsciously, I had already had a very clear and precise notion of the intonations and the intervals that they represent, of all the first elements that constitute modulation and of the characteristic difference between the major and minor modes, even before I could speak, because one day hearing a street singer (some beggar doubtless),

singing a song in the minor, I cried out: ' Mama, why does he sing in *do* when he is crying? '

" I had therefore a perfectly trained ear, and I could with advantage already have held my place as a pupil in a course of *solfeggio*, or I could even have been the teacher." *

By a strange concordance of ideas, the celebrated Professor Zimmermann who was destined to become the father-in-law of Gounod, frequently used this expression: " It is necessary to *inoculate* a child with music."

J. J. Rousseau relates that when he was quite little, one of his aunts sang popular songs to him while rocking him asleep: " I am persuaded," he adds, " that I owe to her my taste, or rather my passion, for music, which was not developed in me until long afterwards." †

From all this, we may regard it as settled and sufficiently demonstrated that long before the period when it is proper to undertake musical instruction, properly so-called, it is not a matter of indifference to prepare the soil for this culture by rooting out ill and hurtful weeds, that is to say by removing from the baby all disturbing causes of the sense of hearing, violent noises, trepidations, shrill or discordant voices, and instruments that are too blatant, with the same care that will be employed later in preventing his hearing anything that might develop bad taste.

A father, who cherishes for his daughter, who is

* Gounod, *Mémoires d'un artiste.*

† J. J. Rousseau, *Confessions.*

still in her cradle (this is a simple supposition), the ambition that she shall shine one day as a dancer at the opera, probably would not be very much surprised if one of his friends should advise him to watch her from her first steps so that she might not have crooked legs. He perhaps might even have thought of it himself.

At bottom, it is exactly the same thing as that of which we have been talking. The only difference is that the legs are visible, and if they are crooked we can see it at once; while if any deformity is produced in the apparatus of hearing, mysteriously fitted as it is into the skull cavity, nobody can detect it until it is too late to apply any possible remedy. And the harm remains. Later, it is asked why this child hears false, and sings false, while his parents heard and sang so true, and it is often merely because his ear has been brutalized or led ill at an age when it would have been easy to care for it, as is done for the visible organs, the developments of which are easy to follow day by day.

Now, if the ear is defective, it would be better to renounce at once all thought of making music, first because such a one can never be anything but a detestable musician of the lowest order, a musician who is far too numerous, and then because he can never experience any pleasure in it. And since music is ranked among the arts that give delight, it would be simply absurd to undertake the study of it with the half-certainty that one would never extract from it the slightest enjoyment, that one would never arrive at

anything but pitiful results, in default of the natural taste and the special aptitude that are so necessary, and, finally, that in pursuing a chimerical aim, precious time is lost that might be utilized in a thousand agreeable and profitable ways. Therefore, I hold those parents very guilty, who, simply for the sake of conforming to the present stupid fashion that demands that everybody shall be more or less of a musician, exact such efforts from their children without having assured themselves beforehand that they have at least strong chances of success.

## IV. Indications of Musical Talent in Young Children

How then can we satisfy ourselves that a predisposition for music exists?

To speak the truth, I do not believe that there are any absolutely certain and infallible signs; but there are numerous indications which rarely deceive. And here are a few of them:

The child (I am not speaking of an infant, but of a child of from four to six years, and perhaps older), manifests an evident pleasure in listening to music. He walks up to the piano. He loves to hear singing. He asks not to be sent to bed in the evening when there is music. That is a good sign already.

A child, who allowed to choose between an evening at the circus and a concert of serious music, selects the concert, deserves that this should be noticed; if he does this again, so much the more reason.

He drums on the table, or upon the window-panes, with a ruler or his fingers, with a clearly-marked rhythm, reproducing the recognizable swing of a waltz or a march,—that is also of good augury.

If he easily retains the simple airs that he has heard sung, children's tunes, popular songs and hymns, and enjoys singing them to himself for his own pleasure,—that is a serious indication. If he really sings them in tune and in time, that is an excellent sign, which must be taken into consideration.

If, of his own initiative, without the suggestion of any one, he has the idea of picking out those airs upon the piano with one finger, that is still better; and if he should happen to succeed, that is almost conclusive.

One may then proceed to a few little experiments with the object of proving if he possesses those two precious qualities: *the sense of the imitation of tones*, and *the memory of tones*, which are not the same thing at all.

One should make him listen, from any instrument whatever, or still better from the voice, to one note first, just one, asking him to sing it. If he should succeed, then, try another note, but be careful not to exceed the limits of his little voice, so that you may not demand anything beyond his powers, nor confuse, nor trouble him. Then you can make him listen to and repeat two consecutive notes,—a major second and a minor second, third, fourth, or fifth, but always intervals easy to grasp, taking care always to give them sometimes ascending and sometimes de-

scending. If he satisfies these tests, which need not be carried beyond three notes, he certainly possesses the instinctive sense of the imitation of tones, a very precious thing, because it is acquired with great difficulty and thorough study by those who are not naturally gifted with it.

With regard to the memory of tones, one must proceed differently. After having made him listen intently to any note whatever, for example *la* of the scale, to which you very strongly call his attention, and which you make him sing and repeat, you play for him the scale of C major very slowly, asking him to recognize *la* as you play it. You can modify the experiment by playing the tones out of their regular order in the scale. You can make it still more difficult and more of a test by talking of something or other, by telling a story, or by clapping your hands, or knocking on the table, making noises which have no musical character whatever, between the moment his attention is called to the note and that when you ask him to recognize it among several others. He who stands this second test, may be truly considered as having a correct ear, and is very probably apt to profit by musical instruction.

It must be well understood that these divers tests, which are easy enough to vary, should always be undertaken in familiar play, and without any solemnity that might produce the intimidating appearance of an examination.

Moreover, if this is not successful one day, there is nothing to prevent one from trying it again a

month or a year later, without despairing in the least; for the musical temperament is far from manifesting itself at the same age in every individual, and extreme precocity is not always an indispensable advantage.

I will quote here, however, a very interesting example that I have found in a volume by Camille Saint-Saëns, which will show in what manner the musical sense is revealed during the earliest years among those who are veritably well organized, as well as the proper way a child should be put through the divers experimental tests of which we have just spoken.

"In my childhood, I had a very delicate ear, and people often used to amuse themselves by making me name the note produced by any object that would give out a tone,—candlestick, glass, or sconce. I could always tell the note without any hesitation. When they asked me what note a bell produced, I always replied: 'It does not make one note; it makes several.' This seemed to astonish people greatly." *

And I wager that this will still greatly astonish many persons, because the multiple resonance of bells, which really do produce several tones—despite the proverb "*qui n'entend qu'une cloche n'entend qu'un son*"—there is always one tone so strongly prominent that it absorbs the attention to such a degree as to render the others completely unnoticeable. And it was in hearing these that the young Saint-Saëns exhibited a remarkable sagacity, and a truly rare delicacy of hearing.

* Camille Saint-Saëns, *Harmonie et Mélodie.*

Saint-Saëns was a prodigy of precocity; Mozart was another; at the age of four years he already composed little minuets; Haydn, at five, manifested the pleasure he would have in taking part in a family concert by imitating the playing of the violin by means of a small stick upon a piece of wood. This was less striking, but shortly afterwards, he really played, and with taste, upon a real violin. We might cite several others who became very great artists, but this is far from being a necessary condition; one might almost assert the contrary, that in general the little prodigies, hectic blossoms of a hothouse, do not enjoy long careers. All these unfortunate violinists, pianists, and others, of six and four years, products of unnatural forcing, whom we see some Barnum exhibiting throughout the world, are most frequently destined to become very ordinary musicians, or to disappear early from the artistic horizon, where they have no longer the slightest reason to attract attention.

Beethoven was not an infant prodigy; far from it; it was necessary to beat him in order to make him work at his piano: so says Fétis, to whom I leave the responsibility of this bad treatment. Even if it did succeed so well in his case, there is no reason to make beating a rule for teaching the arts of pleasure.

Rubinstein expresses a very interesting opinion upon this subject: "Most of our great masters were infant prodigies, but the number of great masters is very small in comparison with the great mass of musically-gifted children we admire every year, and

who, later, fulfil none of their promises. Ordinarily, musical talent manifests itself in children at the tenderest age; but there comes a time (with boys from fifteen to twenty, and girls from fourteen to seventeen) when this musical talent suffers a crisis, is weakened, or goes to sleep forever; only those who are capable of passing this Rubicon, become great artists, their number is very limited." *

## V. Proper Age to Begin the Study of Music and How to Teach Music to Young Children

The age at which it is expedient to begin the elementary musical instruction is essentially variable, and cannot be fixed precisely. It cannot be the same for everybody, and remains subordinate to various considerations, the principal only of which I can think of enumerating here.

In the first place, come the general physical condition and health of the young subject: one should never exact from a sickly child a brain-work, in reality very enervating and exciting, that might result in some irremediable harm to his normal development; examples of cases of over-taxation are, unhappily, not rare. The child should be gay, well and alert; if he is not, then it would be better to wait. Moreover, it is very important to take into account his character, the aptitude that he may have shown already for some other study, such as reading, the recitation of fables, or for games that demand a certain

* A. Rubinstein, *La musique et ses représentants.*

effort of intelligence or memory. Finally, although wishing for their appearance, it is necessary to wait patiently for the manifestation of some one of the precursory signs, by which, as we have shown, those who are gifted by nature with a temperament qualified to receive the benefits of a musical education may be almost certainly recognized. The great philosopher Kant has told us: "To develop each individual in the full perfection of which he is capable, that is the aim of education." Before attempting to inculcate the principles of any art whatsoever into a child, it is imperative therefore to assure yourself that he is in the desired condition to profit by them. I repeat this here for the last time, so as not to return to it again.

When the proper moment seems to have arrived for giving him his first musical notions, it is necessary to choose a method, a plan of procedure, and to put him in the hands of a teacher, being thoroughly saturated with this truth, that it is not more difficult to direct an education well than to direct it badly; the whole thing is to take trouble enough to enlighten oneself instead of walking blindly.

Just here, it is well to remember that music is above all a language, and that the system of teaching that is best adapted to it is the one also that accords best with the teaching of languages, the one by which we all have learned our mother tongue, and which is naturally pointed out to us by simple common sense: practice before theory.

To teach music to a very young child by means of

principles, no matter how simple they may be, is about as judicious as trying to teach him to talk by grammar. Certainly, one may and one does accomplish this, but at the cost of how much lost time, of how much irritation to the parents and the teacher, and of what useless fatigue to the poor little brain of the pupil!

It is so easy, on the contrary, to present the thing as an amusement, a game that is a relief from his others, and to let Nature work. Nature has endowed the child with the spirit of imitation; it is because he hears people talking around him that he tries to do the same, and of his own accord attempts first to pronounce the simplest syllables, *ba* or *ma*, which he repeats to satiety for several months, before passing to others that are more complicated, such as *Za* or *ra*, and then unites them to form words. If, as a cruel experiment, one should impose absolute silence around a child from his birth to his coming of age, it would never occur to him to try to talk. This is, moreover, exactly what happens in the case of those who are deaf from their birth; never having heard any talking, it never occurs to them to talk, although their vocal organs may be perfectly formed for it; and they become deaf-mutes. It is then by the simple spirit of imitation, and by amusing himself, that the child learns to form all the sounds of the spoken language, and not because some one explains to him the difference between the vowels and consonants, the labials and the gutturals. Later, when he knows how to form words, it is in precisely the same manner that he learns how to

construct phrases, first of two words, and then longer ones, always without any advice whatever, but only by listening to what is said around him and striving to imitate it as closely as possible; (it is then that he acquires the accent of the place where he is brought up, as well as the expressions and turns of phrases of the persons who are with him); it is not until very much later, when he already speaks in such a way as to make himself thoroughly understood that you should make such observations as these to him: Do not say: "I am been," but "I am gone"; or again you must not say "I have conversed to Mama," but "I have conversed with Mama." But before that, he will speak, if not correctly and elegantly, at least in such a way as to make himself understood perfectly.

When afterwards, the child is able to read, if he has the taste for reading and some little spirit of observation, he perfects his speech in the most natural manner, and, what is still more curious, he often teaches himself orthography thus by pure instinct, by the memory of the eyes, without any one ever having given him the slightest knowledge of the most elementary rules of grammar. I know several instances of young persons who have never opened a grammar and who write French in an absolutely correct manner; when a chain of words puzzles them, they write it in several ways, look at it attentively and invariably choose,—the best. I do not maintain that, carried to such a degree, this method would suit every subject; no! first of all, it is necessary that they should love to read, and read much; then it is also nec-

essary that they should read attentively and by bringing their attention to bear upon the aspect and physiognomy of the words and phrases, that they finally should possess the spirit of observation, imitation and the memory of the eyes.

It may seem as if I am wandering from my subject; on the contrary, we are in the very heart of it. Of all languages, music is the one that best accommodates itself at the start, particularly when one is dealing with very young children, to this means of teaching, by practice only at first, reserving all theoretical notions until the time when the learner shall have reached the age of reason. Then theory will be indispensable and should take the chief place. Here is an experiment which I have made several times, and which has always succeeded: introduce a child whom you have reason to believe is well-organized into an elementary course of *solfeggio*, where the pupils are a little older than he is; at first he is greatly flattered. The teacher makes him sit near him, and then says nothing to him, absolutely nothing, he only watches and listens; we conduct the class without taking any notice of him, except to have him taken away on the pretext that the lesson is over, if he shows signs of fatigue, or if he yawns. At the end of a dozen sittings, we shall be surprised to see him try to beat time, in order to do like the others, or even try to sing; when he is with little friends who are dancing in a ring, we let him dance with them; since the game is a singing-game, he has a perfect right to sing with the others. Every now and then we may ask him to

show us on the music-books where we are; taken unawares, he makes mistakes at first; then he will try to follow by the glance of his big comrades, but in a short time he will be able to follow the music alone, by means of the figure, particularly if we trust him with the duty of turning the pages, which will force him to fix his attention. If at this time we begin to teach him the notes, we shall find that he knows them already. A great and troublesome halting-place will have been passed without his ever having suspected it.

From this time forward we can treat him like the other pupils, and make him take an actual part in the lesson.

One cannot always have at hand a good course of elementary *solfeggio*, intelligently directed. We indicate elsewhere another manner of undertaking this study,* which could not be pushed too far, nor prolonged too greatly, for this is the one that makes the true musician.

## VI. Solfeggio, Musical Dictation, Importance of Hearing Good Music and Proper Length of Time for Daily Study

*Solfeggio*, properly speaking, consists of singing whilst naming the notes and beating the time. It is thus that we learn to read in all the keys with equal facility, an indispensable matter for those who wish to carry their studies very far, especially in the field of composition. "Apply yourself without delay to

* See page 89.

the reading of ancient clefs, otherwise the treasures of the past will remain hidden from you." * Later, when we shall speak in detail of the special education of the singer and that of the instrumentalist, we will specify the clefs that may be rightly dispensed with, but which it would be better to know, this is in reserve.

The works written for the instruction of *solfeggio* are innumerable. There are as many good and excellent as bad ones, it is the teacher who must know how to discriminate; the good ones are all those that have an artistic and musical character; the others must be shunned like *poison*, for they have the power to alter the nature and pervert the taste of the child forever. And at no stage of the instruction is it more necessary than at the beginning to spur the pupil towards the beautiful, and to form his judgment by keeping from him all that is vulgar, trivial and ugly, for he will always feel the effects of it.

Of the numerous courses, the *solfeggio d'ensemble*, of two or three parts, is a very good thing, but, of itself insufficient. It must not be neglected, however.

An excellent complement to *solfeggio* is *musical dictation*, which bears the same relation to *solfeggio* that the theme does to the interpretation, or rather that writing does to reading. In this exercise, it is no longer the pupil that sings, but the master; after having made them listen *in extenso* to a phrase of eight or

* Robert Schumann, *Conseils aux jeunes musiciens*, translated from the German by Franz Liszt, a very small work, from which, however, we shall take pleasure in quoting very often.

sixteen bars, he cuts it into short fragments, each of which he repeats several times, with pauses, so that the pupil may have the necessary time to write what he has heard and understood.

If we find ourselves face to face with a pupil totally lacking in voice, or suffering from aphonia, we can try to supply the study of *solfeggio* which is forbidden to him on account of his unhappy constitution, by developing that of dictation, which he should then be made to write in the different clefs. This is, however, only a makeshift.

As soon as the child is able to read and write fluently, it becomes expedient to make him learn the first elements of the *Theory of Music*, which, in all probability, he will be apt to understand and to assimilate easily. With the exception of what has to do with definitions, it is absolutely useless to make him learn anything at all by heart and word for word,—an excellent system for parrots but not for artists. It is infinitely better simply to make sure that the thing has been thoroughly understood, and well fixed in the intelligence, and to be satisfied, even if it is expressed a little awkwardly, as it adapts itself to the requirements of infantile explanations. Later, it will be necessary to dive deeper into the study of Theory, and even to require the pupil to solve these problems that are somewhat of the nature of a Chinese puzzle, such as are found in all the books written especially for this study. It is a kind of mental gymnastics, a training exercise which has in it nothing whatever that is fatiguing, and which only

those disparage who have not experienced its benefits.

At this period in the education of a young musician, it is already very good and useful to make him hear good music from time to time, and to take him to Symphony Concerts, always provided that he seems to take pleasure in them, because in the contrary case it would be much better to put them off. If he has a very true voice, even if it is but a tiny thread, and if he is sufficiently advanced not to give any trouble, we may try to gain him admission as a participant in one of the numerous well-trained choruses, whether composed of artists or amateurs, to take part in some of the rehearsals, at first partial, and afterwards the whole time, and finally in the Concert itself. All this is to give him the opportunity of hearing music talked about, and of rubbing against musicians, perhaps composers, of seeing how music is made, and learning a lot of things through his own little experience. All this is excellent, upon the simple condition that it is always a pleasure and not a tax. It must also be a condition that he shuns the vulgar and coarse music of a low order, such as that of the Cafés-Concerts, Music Halls, and other horrible anti-artistic places. In a word, from this time forward all occasions to bring the child into contact with music and musicians (*good* music and *good* musicians), must be sought for, and at the same time to repulse emphatically all that might cause him fatigue, enervation, and *ennui*, which must be avoided above all else. All this is a question of tact

and caution, of which the parents and teachers are the sole judges.

To finish with this period of infantile education, upon which I have thought I ought to insist somewhat at length, because to my mind it most frequently is of decisive importance, I will add that one must not demand sustained attention to the elementary study of music from the child for more than half an hour (even a quarter of an hour at the beginning) at a time; more would be lost time, the mind being no longer on the work. But one can repeat this half hour (or this quarter of an hour) two or three times during the day, at long intervals, using these intervals for rest, play, a walk, or other studies, such as writing, reading, mathematics, drawing, etc., etc., which should not be neglected, for the study of music alone will never lead to anything great, even for a professional musician, who would experience great unhappiness in life, and even much hindrance if he were deprived of all other instruction, and had never learned anything except music. Now these three half-hours a day, well-employed, are perfectly adequate to obtain the desired result at this period of education.

During these primary studies, which may be prolonged, according to the temperament, the activity and the degree of intellectual receptivity of the neophyte, from two months to two years, it is well to observe him attentively and minutely, for a happy circumstance, often the most unforeseen of all, may chance to reveal some splendid aptitude in him and

indicate the exact path into which he should be directed. Whatever this may be, we shall never have to regret the time so far devoted to the elementary study of Solfeggio, Dictation and Theory, for in any case it will be necessary to pursue them, and for a long time. They form the best and the most solid basis of all musical instruction; but we have said that it becomes necessary thenceforth for us to form a definite aim, to know what we wish and whither we are going, for "an education without a definite aim produces a character without force," as Legouvé has said excellently. It is well not to let the slightest hints escape you, to take note of them, to compare them, to put them together, and finally to stop with some determined object. Upon what does the course of a river depend? Upon the first stone that it encounters on its way. What is it that decides the course of a whole life? Often a fortuitous meeting, a circumstance of futile appearance, a word heard by chance. Nothing should be neglected.

Here it is as though we were at a railway junction. Upon the line that we shall choose, the entire continuation of the route will depend. Therefore we cannot reflect too maturely nor examine the matter too minutely before making a choice that will certainly have a great and decisive influence upon the future.

## VII. Indications of Special Aptitudes and Opinions of Great Men on Music

Very often, at this age, the little pupil becomes enamoured of a certain instrument, listens to it with more pleasure than to any other, likes to look at it and to touch it, and to try to make it speak. We may then put the question to him: would you like to learn how to play it? And even the reply to this question should often be interpreted according to the more or less communicative, enthusiastic, or timid character of the child. If we think from some way by which he behaves that he really has a desire for it, and if on the other hand we have already been able to observe that he has perseverance in his ideas, if, finally, his choice has not fallen upon some ridiculous instrument such as the Chapeau Chinois,* for example, there is nothing to prevent us from deciding, in principle, to direct him at first *with a view* to the study of that instrument rather than any other. This does not mean to say that we must immediately go and buy him one, for there are some instruments the study of which he must not undertake until he has got his growth; but it does mean to say that from this time forward we can map out a plan of work for him, preparing him in the most logical and favourable way for the mastery of his favourite instrument.

Certain signs may give us reason to believe that

* Chinese Pavilion, a kind of sistrum made of brass plates and bells, used only in military music.

we are in the presence of a composer's organization; for example, if the child, having only the vaguest ideas about music, is tormented with a desire to write, and to note down something that he has invented or sincerely believes that he has invented, such as a little melody to some words, or a dance tune. I can mention one, who, after hearing his elder sister play the first sonatas of Mozart, composed (?) a *Grande Sonate* (that was the title), dedicated to his sister, which had only thirteen bars all told. The *Allegro* numbered five: the first movement, made up of four notes, represented the first motif in C; the second in G, with the word *expressive*, constituted the second *motif*, after which a very thick double bar, with dots, clearly indicated that the first repetition was finished; the second began with some scales, having many accidentals scattered at random, after which returned the first and second *motifs*, both in C. The *Adagio* contained only three chords, all false, but quite ample in intention, and ended with an organ-point. The *Finale*, evidently unfinished, was in six-eight time, and was peppered with notes, quavers, semi-quavers, and demi-semi-quavers; there was no common sense in any of it, but one felt that it was intended to go very, very fast, with a dizzying rapidity; it had seven bars. The whole thing was written on a sheet of small letter paper, which he had ruled himself, all awry, and splashed with numerous blots of ink.

To any one ignorant of musical education, this would have been considered as an insignificant child's

play, a simple and harmless scrawl; but it really showed an extraordinary power of observation and imitation: the first piece divided into two repeats, the second *motif* announced in the key of the dominant, and then in the principal key; the care to begin the second repeat with surprising modulations (!), the very short *Adagio* with its solemn organ point; and the *Finale*, of infinitely greater speed than the rest,—all this revealed an instinct for form that was absolutely stupefying, for here, crudely sketched, as if to order, was exactly the plan of the classic Sonata and Symphony likewise. This child has become a composer of talent, although somewhat eccentric, and even obtained, many years ago, the Grand Prix de Rome.

However, we must mistrust a singular aberration in certain individuals who imagine that they are composing because they accumulate notes, clefs, sharps and flats upon music paper that mean nothing, and who take a great pleasure in doing this,—what do I say?—their sole pleasure. This becomes an obsession with them, a haunting occupation. I have known several of these; with the last one, this peculiar condition, which is certainly unhealthy, continued until the age of sixteen or seventeen years, when I lost sight of him. He refused to apply himself to any studies, musical or foreign to music, and spent his life in the library of our Conservatoire in gazing at the most complicated scores, of which, naturally enough, he could understand absolutely nothing, then, going home, he would begin afresh with a gentle perti-

nacity, to cover sheets upon sheets of ruled paper with signs resembling those he had just seen, signs that offered no mutual co-ordination, and devoid of all meaning. He seemed to be intelligent and expressed himself very well. His father had tried in vain to make him learn designing, his own craft, and then the violin, but he would not listen to any of this, and begged to be allowed to come as a purely passive listener to my class in harmony and continue his beloved reading in the library, which made his unhappy father say: "It is very necessary that I should make a composer of him since I can make nothing else of him." This reasoning was absurd. I have seen several other examples of this peculiar monomania, but in a lesser degree; if this were an isolated case, I should not have spoken of it.

The consequence is that when you see a young child manifest this irresistible desire to write, thus fascinated by music-paper, you must not jump at the conclusion that he is exhibiting the organization of a composer; neither must you throw away nor tear up his crude attempts, but show them to some experienced musician to learn if he can discover in them any sign that reveals a marked predisposition.

There are also some who improvise for hours upon the piano, sometimes even without ever having learned to play, and who take a very great pleasure in it. Means should be found to get some artist to hear this, one who is endowed with good judgment and capable of appreciating whether this is simply an incoherent fabric, more or less attractive, or whether

it contains the trace of a musical idea or conduct in the development, or even whether these so-called improvisations are not merely simple reminiscences, or memories of things heard, in which case they would reveal memory and the faculty of imitation rather than the gift of creating new forms.

Perhaps one infallible indication is the instinctive preference for good music, and the dawn of that judgment that prevents the thought of applying the epithet " pretty " to the overture of *Don Giovanni*, or that of " beautiful " to a charming *Air de Ballet* by Léo Delibes. Musical memory is also a good thing, that which enables you to retain and to sing in tune and time a melody that has pleased you. But, in reality, it is far from being always the case that precursory signs manifest themselves from the tenderest age. Most frequently, the child simply gives proof, quite early, of a general aptitude for music, and it is in the course of his studies, and instigated by them, that the desire to compose is developed in him, denoting that there is reason to direct his instruction specially towards that end.

As for those gentle young persons who, while affirming that they wish to compose, wait patiently until their studies are over before they attempt to write, on the pretext that they don't know how, we may be certain that they do not possess the divine spark.

Certain children find means during their *solfeggio* lessons, or while taking part in choruses, to show a natural feeling for good phrasing, which leads them to sing with intelligence, to shade well and to take

breath at the right place. With regard to such, there should be no hesitation in letting them have some veritable singing-lessons from a good master, and in seeking opportunities for them to sing short solos at Church, at the Temple, at Concerts, or in informal musical gatherings. Whatever may be their future vocation, they will always be glad to know how to sing; but it is imperative to suspend immediately all vocal exercise, singing or *solfeggio*, as soon as the first signs of the change of voice appear. We will return to this in the proper place.

We also find children who do not manifest the slightest aptitude. Here there is room for distinction.

If this indifference and apathy extend over all studies and are not peculiar to music, we must regard it merely as general laziness, and try to find for music as for all the others, a stimulus in emulation, promises of reward, or threats of punishment. Keep from threats, however, as much as possible, for the use of chastisement is a very sad way to instil the love of art. I have sometimes seen brutal parents beat a child unmercifully because he refused to work, and then compel him to sing *with taste* in the midst of tears and sobs. I have followed several of these children. They all became worthless. So you must not beat them, but, when the laziness is general and not confined to any one thing, you must not yield to them, either; applying that speech of Rollin's: "Education is a gentle and insinuating mistress, the enemy of violence and constraint," with gentleness and firmness you must impose upon the child some musical task, even indif-

ferent or mechanical (which forms an exception) however short, be it only half an hour a day, among his other studies, which, moreover, will refresh him in spite of himself; and if he is too rebellious to do this work when alone, then have recourse to a tutor to make him do it. And this is the reason why: it happens very frequently with natures that are weak and devoid of energy, that the musical aptitude * is in some measure asleep and does not exhibit itself until much later, towards 18 or 20 years of age; this is particularly frequent with young persons who have worked in mathematics or the exact sciences; one fine day, they wake up with a violent desire to play the piano or the violin, or to know how to read a score, and then, if no one has known enough to force them to acquire some elementary ideas in their early years, even against their will, they are very unhappy at not being able to satisfy their inclination. To acquire these, they make the most fruitless efforts, with poor results or none at all, for they have no longer the necessary suppleness of mind, having passed the happy age when one learns languages while being amused. They deplore their laziness, but it is too late. And thus one would have done them a kindness by exacting from them those few moments of daily practice, even passive, I repeat, borne with weariness, which would now suffice them as a basis upon which they could give themselves a good instruction by means of intelligent amateurs. These cases seldom occur in

* I have not to concern myself with the others; but it is possible that it is the same with all, at least regarding the arts.

Germany, where music forms part of the education; all the children who go to school learn to sing, both boys and girls without exception; each class begins with a chorus celebrating the benefits of the instruction, or the respect due to parents, or even some patriotic or *religious* subject (what an education!), and thus all the little scholars are little musicians. Our neighbours, therefore, happen to put into practice a principle of one of our great historians, who was also a great moralist: " Music brings to the soul a veritable inward culture, and is part of the education of a people " (Guizot). In 1538, Luther expressed an analogous idea in other terms: " One cannot question," said he, " that music contains the germ of all the virtues; and I can only compare those whom music does not touch to blocks of wood or stone. Youth then should be brought up in the practice of this divine art."

For him, who also said: " Music governs the world, it is a gift of God, and it is closely allied to theology," it is certain that music formed an integral part of belief, his admirable Chorales lead us to believe this, and he could not conceive an education in which it would not have a large share.

Finally, there exists a last category, that of the children who, industrious and active in all their other studies, have an invincible repugnance and an involuntary and irresistible aversion to everything in the domain of music. " Education should bring to light the ideal of the individual," said J. P. Richter, who knew what he was saying. Now, for these, their ideal

certainly is not music. It is to be hoped that they have another one, and one must know how to seek for it, to discover it and help it to soar, not fatiguing them more than is necessary with studies to which they are not adapted and which will never lead to anything that is worth while.

There is quite enough bad music and there are quite enough bad musicians, and so there is nothing to regret. I am most certainly not one of those who wish that everybody should be a musician; on the contrary, this seems to me one of the faults of the age. What I should like, and this is not at all the same thing, is that all children, even those who show no disposition for it, with the exception of some specially marked cases of repugnance, should receive sufficient material musical instruction, to enable them at a later period, in case the artistic sentiment should declare itself, to find a foundation prepared, so that they should not have to begin entirely at the beginning, which would be too laborious and repellent for them.

Do not all the large establishments for general instruction prudently act in this way, by inculcating in the child, before his career is decided upon, elementary notions touching a little on all things, several of which in the course of time will have to be abandoned as being of no use to him?

I should add that those absolutely recalcitrant natures of which we have spoken last are excessively rare, for which we must congratulate ourselves, if Shakespeare is to be believed:

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affection dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.*

Even if we make allowance for poetical exaggeration, and admit that one may be a perfectly honest man without the love of music, we must pity those to whom the intelligence of our beautiful language is closed, for many of the purest and most elevated enjoyments are thereby refused to them forever.

Putting these exceptions aside, let us return to that important question, from which we have wandered a little, what direction to give to the musical studies of each individual when once he has acquired some elements of *solfeggio*, and even if one wishes, of the piano.

If he manifests any special taste for any instrument, among those that are within the capacity of his age, the best thing is to let him follow his impulse, which has every chance of being good. If, on the contrary, his choice falls upon an instrument which it would be better for him not to attempt till later, profit by this time to advance the general instruction, preparing meanwhile the paths by the musical studies which will be marked out in the next chapter.

It is the same if, attracted by the prestige of the theatre or the bait of a lucrative profession, he aspires to be a singer; we should mark time while wait-

* Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act V., Scene I.

ing for the appearance of the voice, but without neglecting before all else to make a musician of him, a thing so much the more precious because it is so rare in the world of singers. Here, however, there is a very interesting exception which we shall reserve for Chapter III.

If, finally, he exhibits a very marked propensity for composition, it is never too early to start him upon the complex studies of a composer (for they are very long if one pleases). What is essentially desirable is not to neglect one of them, and thereby become a thorough musician, in possession of the technique of the art in its full expanse.

It may often happen, as has been already said, that although surrounded with the wisest precautions, we have chosen a road aside from the most suitable one, whether because appearances were deceitful or because we interpreted them wrongly, or because as the years passed new aptitudes came to light. In this case, if the individual has followed the general plan of study which is the exclusive subject of this work, he can easily manage to apply to a new aim the greater part of the knowledge already acquired with another end in view, and reduce to a *minimum* the loss of time occasioned by that fork of the road.

## VIII. Importance of Conducting Studies Methodically and Logically

To gain this result, the great point is always to conduct the studies methodically and logically in the normal order that agrees with the first branch that we think advisable to adopt; in a word, don't "put the cart before the horse." In this way we shall constantly find points of contact between this branch and others, we shall never have learned anything really useless, and we shall be able to walk in the new path without having to go back too far; while with studies pursued in a desultory manner and not linked together as they should be, we may squander and throw the most manifest talents into confusion, and cause the loss of a vocation.

Several years ago, Massenet, then Professor of Composition in the Conservatory, sent to me a young provincial, eighteen years of age, saying something to this effect: "Here is a boy who is strongly recommended to me, he has ideas and a passion for composition, but as he has never studied harmony, he is as ignorant as a carp in the art of writing; I think that after he shall have studied two or three years with you, he will be ripe for counterpoint and fugue with me." Naturally, I admitted him without examination, and I gave him for Mentor, as is the custom in our classes, which are too large for the professor to concern himself with each one individually, the oldest and the most serious of his comrades, not without telling him by whom he was sent to me and

the importance that I attached to his being carefully directed. At the end of a few lessons, the latter, very much vexed, declared to me that it wouldn't do at all, he could not possibly make him understand. I tried in my turn, and I discovered what was lacking in the pupil; this was the first elements of *solfeggio*. He did not even know how to tell the keys. Heavens! things looked grave. I then managed to get one of my colleagues, professor of *solfeggio*, to admit him into his class as a listener, for he was long past the regulation age when he could have been received as a pupil; there, he worked steadily, but he was already thick-headed, and it took more than two years of effort, aided by private lessons, to turn him into a passable reader. Now then, he is back in my class, still full of courage, and this time in good condition; he can now, at the age of twenty-one years, at last begin his special studies in composition. Everything was going well, extremely well, and he was giving undeniable proofs of intelligence and facility, when the period of military service arrived; his regiment was sent to garrison in a little isolated spot; no theatre, no concerts, no means of intellectual development. When he returned to me for the third time, three years later, he had lost in a great measure the benefit of his first studies in harmony, and, after several fresh attempts, we were forced to agree with one accord that it was really too late to dream of recovering henceforth the suppleness of mind necessary to acquire all the knowledge in which he was deficient, that he could not enter that career before an age when it

ought to be already clearly marked out, and that finally, after having expended so much courage and energy, there was nothing to do but to give up all hope of ever becoming a composer such as he had dreamed of being. Inconsolable, but unable to bring himself to the complete renunciation of the art which he had thought to have made the aim of his life, the poor boy became a clarinettist! and as he had not began to study that instrument until late, he plays it very badly, which greatly distresses him, for he has still an exquisite taste.

It is very certain that if his parents, who now deplore their blunder, instead of having opposed the flight of his genius, (for he had always begged them to let him study music) had only consented during his early years to let him have some *solfeggio* lessons and to study music as an amateur according to his desire, things would have been entirely different. He would have come to the Conservatoire at the required time, and sufficiently prepared to learn harmony, and the rest would have gone along smoothly. Their terror at his aspirations to become a composer led them to make a bad clarinettist of him.

This example may be instructively accompanied by an anecdote humourously related by Berlioz.

"A man, a rich landowner, deigned to present to me his son, aged twenty-two years, who, according to his own confession, was still unable to read music.

"I come to entreat you, Monsieur," he said, "to be good enough to give lessons in *high composition* to this young man, who will, I hope, shortly be an

honour to you. His first idea was to be a colonel, but notwithstanding the *éclat* of military glory, that of art with its seductions decided him positively; he prefers to make himself a great composer."

"Oh! Monsieur what a mistake! If you but knew all the vexations of this career! The great composers all devour each other; there are so many of them! . . . Moreover, I am not willing to charge myself with conducting him to the goal of his noble ambition. In my opinion it would be better for him to follow his first idea and to enlist in the regiment which you have just mentioned to me."

"What regiment?"

"*Parbleu!* the regiment of colonels."

"Monsieur, your pleasantry is greatly misplaced; I will importune you no longer. Happily you are not the only master and my son can make himself a great composer without your assistance. We have the honour to salute you." *

A great depth of truth is hidden under this amusing form. Persons who imagine that they can become great composers at will by desiring glory and taking a few lessons from a great master are legion. They are ignorant of the patient study to which it is necessary to submit even with the best natural endowments before attaining the level of an honest mediocrity; above all, they are ignorant of the utility of the methodical spirit so indispensable to every form of education, and, perhaps, artistic education more than all.

* Hector Berlioz, *Les Grotesques de la Musique.*

# PART II

## THE STUDY OF INSTRUMENTS

# PART II

## THE STUDY OF INSTRUMENTS

### I. Proper Age to Begin the Study of an Instrument, Choice of a Teacher, and Hints to Parents

Although realizing that I hold a contrary opinion to the greater number of teachers of special instruments, I shall never advise allowing a child, that is not to be exhibited as a phenomenon at shows and circuses, to study any musical instrument whatever before the age of six *at the earliest*. It seems to me a most barbarous practice, and I will not be a party to it. *Solfeggio*, if you like; an instrument, never. This does not prevent allowing little children to amuse themselves by drumming upon the piano if such is their pleasure (and this is something that should be forbidden later), but to impose any study upon them seems to me monstrous, and, moreover, absolutely useless.

There is always here, slight as it may be, a certain amount of physical fatigue, of force expended in an abnormal way, detrimental to growth, and also a concentration of the mind which they ought to be spared since it is not absolutely necessary and might

be hurtful to them. Before making artists, you must make men and women, that is to say just now, little boys and little girls, who are well constituted, sound and capable of supporting the notable increase of physical and mental efforts that will inevitably be imposed upon their general education, without the latter thereby either suffering or being weakened.—I insist upon this point—by the addition of an artistic education, musical or otherwise, together with the different studies involved.

They have quite enough to do up to this time if they learn to read, to write a little, to count upon their little fingers and to commit to memory such short fables or little verses as are within their infantile reach. To demand more of them would be bad judgment. It would be compromising.

This being said, let us see first in a general way what is the best means of producing a good instrumentalist.

When a young artist is about to make his choice of an instrument, or when we intend to help him in this choice, it is advisable to take into account not only his tastes and sympathies, but also his physical aptitudes, and still other considerations, such as the amount of time it is possible for him to devote every day to his musical studies; his definite purpose, which may quite as likely be that of acquiring simply what is called an " amateur talent," aiming at the *virtuosity of an artist;* his social position, which may be of a kind to favour his studies, or to impede them, etc., etc. All this is very delicate and also very important,

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and should not be left to the chance of an unreflecting impulse; by doing the latter we expose ourselves to mistakes that we shall have cause to regret later, when there will be no time to retrace our steps.

The aim of this chapter is precisely to caution the pupil, or his natural advisers, parents or teachers, against the temptations and errors of this kind, by making them acquainted in advance and with a certain exactness, with the special exigences of such or such a study.

It is clear that he who desires to cultivate the art merely for his pleasure, or as a luxury, may very well allow himself to be guided solely by his inclinations or predilections for one instrument or another; the worst that can happen to him, is that he may attain perfection, which is really not a necessity for him. But it is entirely different with him who intends to make art his career, for he is compelled by that very fact to take into consideration first of all the natural qualities with which he is gifted and which he can use to the best advantage. In a word, everybody should know exactly what he wants and what he can do, and this is not an insurmountable difficulty, since it is merely necessary to know, before embarking upon the study of any instrument, how well it suits him, the amount of work that it will impose upon him, and the result that he can confidently hope for.

When once the choice of the instrument is made, it remains to find out what is the best and most profitable way to undertake and pursue the study of it. Now, since a number of fundamental principles may

be applied without distinction to the study of all instruments, we shall first endeavour to collect them here, in order to avoid repetition, reserving for the subdivisions of this chapter the treatment of whatever is peculiar to each family of instruments, or to each of its members considered separately.

1.—The first thing to take note of, is that the study of an instrument, whatever it may be, should be begun very quietly, serenely and without any violence, proceeding by very short periods, short enough never to allow of fatigue. I state this more precisely, so as to make myself thoroughly understood: the advent of fatigue must not be taken as a sign for the momentary cessation of work; this would be too late; you must have a presentiment of it and know when to stop even before it makes itself felt.—This is of capital importance.

Then, little by little, very gradually indeed, one will increase the duration of these periods of study, but always carefully avoiding prolonging them until the moment when the appearance of lassitude is to be feared.

It is not until after one is fully disciplined in the practice of one's instrument that one may venture to brave fatigue, making an extra effort from time to time; and then, frequently, this mode of proceeding, exceptionally employed, may result in rapid progress. But in elementary studies, it is of no value, and is the worst of all methods. Work should be regular and moderate.

Hence arises the necessity of breaking it up and distributing it wisely among the different periods of the day.

All the instructions that we shall give in the following pages—study for a quarter of an hour, half an hour, or an hour—remain subordinate therefore to this invariable rule, that during the first months, at least, work must never be pushed to the point of fatigue, but the student must stop in time, rest and begin afresh.

2.—Acquire at once the habit of studying slowly, never giving way to the pleasure of flinging off scales or rapid passages; by so doing, you only learn to jumble. Always *listen to yourself* and try to get the best quality of tone.

Never work, even for a few minutes, without thinking of what you are doing, the end to be attained; if the attention has wandered, if you find yourself thinking of something else, which is another indication of fatigue, it is better to break off and begin again later. Even for the most elementary work, that of scales, for example, this condition is indispensable; work done with a wandering mind is of no profit; it is a waste of time.

3.—While working at anything whatsoever, elementary or more advanced exercises, *études*, pieces, as also when reading, the time should always be marked in some way; the singer or solfeggist should beat time with the right hand, as the conductor of an orchestra

does with his *bâton*, without the slightest violence or stiffness, but with ease; the player of a wind or stringed instrument, by an imperceptible movement of the toes; and the pianist or harpist, who can spare the use of neither foot nor hand, by counting the time or its subdivisions in a low tone. The singer should not mark the time with his foot, for this always produces a slight trembling in the voice. Neither should the pianist, because then he would acquire the habit of beating it on the pedals, which would produce the most disastrous effects.

4.—Even in the primary studies, you should be careful never to play anything but good music; at least, music that is healthful and well written. "Healthy men are not made by bringing children up on sweets. The nourishment of the mind ought to be as simple and substantial as that of the body. The masters have taken care to supply us abundantly with the former. Let us keep to it." *

For certain instruments, the piano and stringed instruments, this judicious advice will be very easy to follow. For others, such as the wood-wind and brass, it will be infinitely more difficult, their repertory being unfortunately so very much smaller, and somewhat mediocre in quality.

5.—In the study of every instrument, there are two things to work for: technique, or mechanical study, which varies with each instrument; and style, which

* Schumann.

is the same for all. At the beginning, it is always necessary to give the precedence to the mechanism, although it is the least pleasurable. Afterwards, the two may be developed side by side; you can even accustom yourself to shade with intelligence and thus render those exercises that permit of such treatment a little more interesting. The most agreeable moment of study, beyond any doubt, is that when we have become sufficiently master of our mechanism to be able to give all our attention to style,—the art of phrasing well, of shading and of punctuating; but even for this, long studies in technique are indispensable, and we must have the courage to submit to them.

6.—Each instrument should jealously preserve its characteristic *timbre* (quality of tone): a flutist, whose tone makes us think of a clarinet, a trumpet-player whose *timbre* approaches that of the horn, are both equally in the wrong.

7.—From the very beginning of study, faults and good qualities will be revealed. The wise teacher, while correcting the faults and endeavouring to get rid of them, pays even more attention to developing the good qualities and making the most of them. Progress is quicker by this means.

8.—No matter how far advanced in study, never try to excite astonishment by *tours de force* and difficulties vanquished; that must be left for *clowns*. We should always consider mechanism as a means; the

end is to interest and charm. It is far better to play pieces below our present ability, and play them in time, correctly, intelligently and with the expression that belongs to them, than to attack compositions that are too difficult and interpret them in a mediocre manner.

9.—In addition to *solfeggio*, indispensable to everyone, a few ideas of harmony will never do any harm. For the pianist and the harpist, this is even insufficient; a complete knowledge is necessary.

10.—All serious teachers agree in recognizing that a practical knowledge of the piano, without any attempt at virtuosity, is a great advantage to every singer and instrumentalist, and facilitates his special studies.

11.—We should always devote a few moments every day to reading, as soon as it becomes possible, requiring ourselves to read more slowly than the movement indicated, to play strictly in time, and never to stop nor to go back over the ground, even when we have made a mistake.

12.—Ensemble music is a very useful and profitable exercise, perhaps the best of all for forming the taste and developing the style, but not until we have become a perfect master of our instrument and are capable of comprehending the enormous artistic interest belonging to this study.

This also applies to orchestral music; it is the

veritable school of application. We should therefore eagerly seek every opportunity of taking part in an orchestral symphony, just as soon as we feel qualified to do so intelligently.

Such are the general principles: let us now study their application.

The choice of a teacher, particularly at the beginning, is a very difficult and delicate matter, the importance of which can escape nobody, and in which we cannot be too circumspect. If too severe, he repels the pupil; if too indulgent, he encourages laziness. If too old, he appears as a dotard; if too young, he lacks experience, that is certain. Really, it is very difficult.

It is necessary to strike a happy medium: a man still young, rather gay than morose, which does not in the least prevent him from being serious, and practical, knowing how to present things, even if they are a little tiresome, under their happiest aspect, should, the amount of talent being equal, attract the preference of the parents. If to these qualities he adds that of being fond of children, if he does not disdain to descend from his pedestal every now and then to relate, as a reward, some little *curious and edifying* story (such as Lully, the scullion and his little violinists, Mozart and Marie Antoinette, Orpheus charming the wild beasts, etc., etc.), that would be perfect.

"What!" some one will ask, "the History of Music already?" And, why not, forsooth, if one can

thus teach something without its being suspected, that is so much gain; and awakens taste?

The characteristic sign of a very good teacher is knowing how to make himself loved by his pupils, because while they love him, he makes them love everything relating to his teaching. The lesson hour should be an hour of pleasure, and when we see the child awaiting its return with joyous impatience, it is a proof that we have given him a good master.

Whenever there is a chance of getting a woman for the elementary instruction of young children, I am for the woman; she unquestionably possesses more than we do, by intuition, gentleness, persuasion, and, above all, patience, which are the principal qualities to be sought in a teacher, *always granting equal artistic value*, in all that concerns primary instruction. Now, for *solfeggio*, the piano and the harp, that is to say for most of the studies that are within the capacity of the child, there are just as many women teachers as men; we also find them for the violin and violoncello. In any case of hesitation, I should advise giving the preference to a woman-teacher, but always with the same reservations, that is to say that she must not be too strict, nor too lax, nor too old, nor too young, and this naturally for the same reasons, which here assume even greater importance, for these defects are exaggerated in the female sex. It seems to me useless to dwell here upon this subject to which I shall have occasion to return when it becomes a question of higher education, whether of singing or of instruments.

Now, I have something that is very hard to say; for, to my great regret, I am going to hurt some profoundly respectable persons of the best intentions; I arm myself with all my courage to write it: *parents are always the very worst teachers*, and should refrain as much as possible from giving lessons to their own children.

There, it is said; and cruel as it may be, I will not retract a single word; I will even add to it: even if they are excellent musicians, even if they make teaching their profession, parents are the most detestable teachers when it comes to their own children, but the latter only, because, inversely, for the very reason that they have children of their own, that they love and understand them, they can be perfect teachers for those of others.

Here I feel the need of taking refuge behind the unimpeachable authority of an unquestioned master in the art of education, that of Legouvé: "A father," he says, "has two irremediable defects for a master; he is an intermittent master and an amateur master. . . . Fathers, even when lettered or learned, are not good masters." * A mother is still less so, which goes without saying.

This is what happens about six times a week in a household where the father has undertaken the musical education of his daughter:

"——Papa, I cannot take my lesson just now, because Mamma is going to take me to the dressmaker's to see her dress tried on."

* Ernest Legouvé, *Les Pères et les Enfants.*

"But, my child, I have stayed at home on purpose; later, I shall have no time."

"See, dear," interposes the mother, "it is such a lovely day, you would not want to deprive the child of a walk. You have nothing to do this evening, you can give her *her little lesson* after dinner."

"Very well, if you think that will be better. Go along."

In the evening, after dinner, an old friend comes to see you, or the child is sleepy . . . in short, the lesson is put off till to-morrow; and to-morrow, the same thing happens again.

It is not the same when the appointment is made with a *teacher*, whether he comes to your house, or you go to his. Here, a mutual obligation has been contracted for, and on both sides punctuality and regularity in the lessons is maintained.

Then people are always inclined to treat their own children differently from the children of others; they always find the rules too complicated, the methods too long, and the elementary exercises too developed; they always want to simplify or abridge the work, to judge them more from their hearts than from their reason; or, again, if they are on their guard, they mistrust their tenderness, and become unduly exacting and irritating towards the pupil; and in any case they always have the fault of expecting a too rapid progress from those who are not really profiting; for, as that deep and witty observer Legouvé has said, agreeing in this with J. J. Rousseau and many other great moralists: "The greatest fault in the mat-

ter of education is the desire to go fast. . . . Education should not be a fever. An ordinary master is the best of guides, precisely because he is neither too hurried, nor to anxious to attain his end." *

There are still other reasons: a salaried master comes to give a lesson; the pupil has worked badly or insufficiently; the master is dissatisfied, he bestows a reprimand and demands that such a thing shall not happen again; then it is over, the reproof has been given. If, on the other hand, it is the mother who has given the lesson, she talks about it all day, even when out walking, and she complains about it at table to the father so that he may scold in his turn, until the child, set on edge, begins to cry if he is nervous, to reply impertinently if he is badly brought up; then they send him to bed without kissing him good-night, and he cherishes a deep hatred for music lessons, and for music itself, the original cause of his unhappiness.

Therefore, there is great danger when parents venture to be teachers of their own children; and up to a certain point, one must admit that this danger extends to intimate friends, those who come to the house often, who play with the child and take him on their knees; they are subject, in a less degree, to the same weaknesses as the parents, and the child does not regard them as seriously as he does a stranger whom he only knows as his teacher.

Parents have another *rôle* of equal importance, two other *rôles*, if you prefer; they should place them-

* Ernest Legouvé, *Les Pères et les Enfants*.

selves above and below the professor. Above, because it is they who select him and give him authority over the pupil, and also by the watchfulness that they should always exert over the lesson. Below, by holding themselves always ready to serve him as kindly helpers and tutors, if he expresses the desire, for he may perfectly well prefer not to be aided at all. In any case, they should be present at the lessons, at least frequently, so as to assure themselves of the exact fulfilment of the material part of the master's prescriptions,—the time for study, the division of the work, etc. If the latter should request them to act as tutors, they should take minute notes and preside over the studies conscientiously, reminding the pupil of all that has been ordered and exacting its execution without any curtailment or omission, and above all without modifying or adding anything of their own invention, the indispensable condition upon which a teacher can assume and maintain his responsibility. I consider it unnecessary to dwell upon this point.

Several times I have seen mothers, with essentially praiseworthy intentions, remembering that they had received a good musical education when they were young girls, set themselves to work again when the eldest of their children have reached the age of seven or eight, so as to be able to start their musical education themselves. Every time that they have set themselves up as teachers, the result has been deplorable. When, on the other hand, they have had the good sense to act only as tutors, even when occasionally the professor's ability was inferior to their own,

everything went along smoothly. This experience, which I have often been able to repeat, seems to me absolutely conclusive.

Parents should also make a rule never to discuss together, or with the master, anything with regard to his ideas, methods, or requirements, or any question touching the course of study in the presence of the pupil. The latter (do not forget that we are only concerning ourselves here with the studies of very small children), should consider his master as infallible and impeccable, and blindly accept all that he says, as if it were Gospel truth. If we lessen this confidence, if we throw confusion into the child's mind, we compromise the result fatally. Therefore, if we have some remark to communicate or some observation to make to the teacher, or some wish to express to him, it must be done privately, before or after the lesson, and without the knowledge of the child. This should also be observed, with even more reason, upon the exchange of ideas that the parents have and should have between themselves on the question of the teacher's value, of his talent, and of his manner of teaching, for everything that tends to weaken the blind confidence that the child ought to have in him, everything that may make him suspect that any one could differ with him and not approve of him in every respect and not consider him as an oracle (and children have an unheard-of *finesse*, in such matters, whenever it is a question of criticising their preceptors), will result in depriving the teacher of all or a part of the prestige to which, with regard to his

young pupil, he owes his greatest strength and his greatest means of action.

If we have any serious reason to complain, or to be dissatisfied, we must know how to set ourselves resolutely to change things, however much it is to be regretted, for with every change we must first expect a period of suspension in the progress: it requires at least several days for the pupil to familiarize himself with a new face, with a new manner of expression, often with very different terms for saying the same thing; moreover, there are not two professors, even of equal ability, who hold identical ideas and have the same methods. All this has a tendency to bring about a temporary disturbance in the work, at the very least a hesitation, uneasiness and embarrassment. It would be better to be able to avoid all that.

The most desirable thing of all, at this initial period of musical instruction, is to know where we can put our hand at once upon a teacher capable of carrying the child along quickly, through these primary and secondary studies, so that we shall not have to run after a new master until the time comes for the higher studies, if indeed one should be needed then. It would be ideal to have only one from the beginning to the end; but, for certain instruments, notably the wind instruments, this ideal cannot be realized; but this is not the case with all.

It is therefore very right and proper that parents who are intelligent and solicitous of the future should concern themselves before everything else with this matter of capital importance: the selection at the very

beginning of a teacher who, being sufficiently devoted to his work to accept the ungrateful task of teaching the first elements, should have enough ability to take the child as far as possible in the study of the chosen instrument.

When once this question is settled, things must naturally be allowed to go on for a certain time, for several months or several years, without however letting these lessons be an exclusive occupation, but supplying them, according to the principles already laid down, with diversions, by means of studies unconnected with music, as well as reserving some moments for the complete repose of the mind.

But we should eagerly seize all occasions to let the pupil hear, and if possible to let him see at close range, the great *virtuosi*, or merely able artists of the instrument that forms the object of his studies. This should serve to widen his horizon, excite his ambition, and encourage him to work. At the same time, if he is sufficiently advanced for this, we can induce him to learn or read in advance some of the pieces he will hear executed; by taking note of their degree of difficulty, he will better appreciate the worth of the artists. But that which must be sought after above everything else, is that under these circumstances his attention shall be directed far more to the qualities of style, phrasing and good rendering, than to those of pure technique, notwithstanding the real importance of the latter; and that he shall thoroughly comprehend that if it is precious to possess a fine mechanism it is only for the sake of being able to place it at the service of an ele-

vated style and a beautiful interpretation of the works of the masters; on the contrary, he must turn his attention from *tours de force* and acrobatic feats that have no other merit than vanquished difficulties, which constitute the most paltry side of art.

## II. Tone, Rhythm and Time

Whatever instrument is concerned, we may say with the greatest certainty that from the instant the first elementary knowledge is acquired, what should dominate throughout the remainder of the studies is the earnest effort to create a beautiful *timbre*, and constantly to improve it. Many artists make themselves masters of every kind of technical difficulty, possess a perfect mechanism, and are able to phrase and shade with art and intelligence, without being able to exercise upon the public that captivating and all-embracing charm that is the result of a beautiful sonority. Therefore we will point out, as far as words will serve, the dominant character of the *timbre* that should preferably be sought in every instrument.

What is meant exactly by *having a beautiful tone*, if the tone that is considered beautiful in any one instrument is not the same for all? *To have a beautiful tone* is to produce upon an instrument the different tones of which the scale is composed in the manner that is best calculated to show off the instrument to its greatest advantage. *To have a good tone*, is then to have an excellent quality of tone, a tone pure, clear, full, vibrant and of great brilliancy; a

precious faculty, independent of the talent of execution, properly so-called, and which, in certain individuals, above all, the musicians who play wind-instruments, is not always the fruit of study, but the result of a natural disposition, and principally of a particular conformation of the mouth.*

The contrary negative quality was once very humourously expressed by the words *little tone*, on which subject it is appropriate to recall an anecdote very well-known among orchestra-musicians, which Berlioz has very cleverly narrated under the title of *Sensibility and Indifference—A Funeral Oration in Three Syllables.* I borrow this story from him: "Cherubini was walking in the *foyer* of the Concert Hall of the *Conservatoire* during an intermission. The musicians about him seemed sad: they had just heard of the death of their comrade Brod, a remarkable virtuoso and first oboe at the Opéra. One of them, approaching the old master, said:

"Eh bien! Monsieur Cherubini, nous avons donc perdu ce pauvre Brod!"

"Eh! quoi?"

(Le musicien élevant la voix), "Brod, notre camarade Brod!"

"Eh bien?"

"Il est mort."

"Euh! petit son!" †

* George Kastner, an eminent musicographer, member of the Institute: *Parémiologie musicale de la langue française* (1850)—out of print.

† Berlioz, *Les Grotesques de la musique.*

People also say a *bad tone*, which is even worse than a little tone. On any instrument whatever, a cottony, weak, flabby tone, and one that does not carry, is always a bad tone; the same is true of a tone that is raucous, strident, hollow, or in a word disagreeable in any sense; as also any tone that perverts the characteristic *timbre* of the instrument that produces it and seems to be an imitation of some other. The truly beautiful tone has the breath of health; it is frank, sincere, robust, energetic without being rough, sweet and soft without weakness, and always frankly characteristic, that is to say, without leaving the slightest doubt, for every one with a delicate and experienced ear, as to the instrument by which it is emitted. If therefore, on hearing an instrument played, we find it an impossibility clearly to recognize and name it, the instrumentalist has played bad notes; this proves that his *timbre* is not frankly characteristic, and is lacking in sincerity.

Whenever one speaks of a beautiful *timbre*, of a beautiful sonority, of a good quality of tone, this is what must be understood. Beauty is not the same for all; that of a dog does not consist in having a beak, and an elephant with wings would be as ridiculous as a bird with four feet. It is the same with instruments. A violin can, in certain notes, particularly by means of harmonics, produce a certain illusion of the flute; with the sourdine, it can sometimes recall the oboe. Incidentally, such effects may be employed, but we must not make a habit of this and believe that this is what is called the beautiful quality of violin tone.

It is especially by listening to the great artists that we can come to understand thoroughly what a beautiful *timbre* is, and the enormous prestige it gives to talent; and it is above all by trying to imitate them that we ourselves manage to attain that quality that exceeds all others, and which nothing can replace. It must not be denied that upon certain instruments, a beautiful *timbre* often takes long to acquire, and is, moreover, difficult; but when once it is found, it is never lost.

When he arrives at this point, the young artist ought to have such a love of his instrument, as to believe implicitly that it is the most beautiful of all; and he will truly have reason to think thus, and he ought to be encouraged in his conviction, for in reality there is not a single instrument that is not superior in some respects to all the others; it is this very thing that he ought to see and try to put in evidence. Such an attitude of mind is excellent, and is more favourable than anything else to the blossoming of the great talent of the virtuoso.

Another important matter of attention should be rhythm, and this also from the very beginning to the end of the studies, for a tottering rhythm gives the hearer a kind of discomfort, which he cannot always account for, but which deprives him of a great part of his pleasure. "Play in time," said Schumann, "the playing of many *virtuosi* resembles the staggering of a drunken man." I will add to this a personal observation which everybody can verify: it is that those irritating persons, who have that detestable

mania when walking and talking of stopping every five or six steps to make their argument sink deeper into the mind of their interlocutor, and at need holding the victim by the button of his coat, are always devoid of the rhythmic sense. As for these, we can quickly get rid of them by going another way, or by jumping into a carriage, but it is much more difficult to escape from a musician who is determined to play you his favourite piece, and if he does not play it in time, he subjects you to a veritable torment. Independently of all other more artistic considerations, we may say that to play in time is the politeness of music, just as to speak intelligibly and to write legibly are the acts of a good education. These comparisons seem to me quite just, for all music played in bad rhythm thereby becomes unintelligible, or at least exacts from the listener a mental tension that rapidly becomes painful and fatiguing.

A piece of music, no matter what it is, should stand plumb as a building, and architects are not in the habit of often taking for models the Leaning Tower of Pisa or those of Bologna, which are not for a moment interesting except as curiosities. Rhythm is the breaking up of musical time into parts more or less long or short, but strictly proportional; time is the absolute equality, in duration, of all the notes of the same value. We then can play in time while giving the rhythm in an incomplete manner; but we cannot produce correct rhythm without playing perfectly in time.

It is seldom that the feeling for time is not in-

stinctive; for really, almost everybody walks nearly in time; but when this exact feeling does not exist naturally and in a sufficient degree, it can be developed by the exercise of a well measured walk, by counting the steps as in a military march: *one, two;* or *one, two, three, four;* also by the dance. (It may be remarked, in passing, that that pretended rhythmic difficulty, which frightens beginners at the piano and which is called *three two* or *two three* is solved unconsciously by the least accomplished dancers in the two-step *Valse*, simply because no one ever dreamed of telling them that it was a difficulty; while the orchestra is playing in three time, they are dancing in two; for this, it is sufficient for them to fix their attention only upon the first beat of the music, which at each return, coincides with their own first beat.)

We can also cultivate this faculty by means of a prudent use of the metronome, which is nothing more or less than a clock beating the fractions of seconds with a mathematical and inflexible regularity. This inflexibility, however, which constitutes its whole value, becomes a fault if we abuse this mechanical device, and communicates an unpleasing rigidity to the pupil. This is why, although recommending its usage in certain cases, we believe that its employ should be limited.

First of all, we should *never* make use of it if we possess instinctively the feeling for time, and the equality of time intervals, which happens ninety-nine times out of a hundred. It should be reserved for those exceptional cases where the pupil truly has

trouble in accomplishing this mental operation, and where the ordinary means of beating time, and counting, have failed. Then, and then only, he should use it, but by applying it solely to scales, exercises and purely mechanical studies, which under these circumstances, should engross the greatest part of the time consecrated to study. With regard to all pieces in which qualities of style, even summary, are to be displayed, it is imperative to abstain from it completely, excepting, be it clearly understood, in passages of dexterity, which, from the standpoint of execution, may be likened to simple studies. Under these conditions it may be used with profit. But this is not the true application of the metronome. Above all, its object is to determine, with a precision quite beyond the reach of the conventional musical terms, the *movement*, the exact speed that belongs to a piece of music, according to the intention of the composer. "To drag or hurry the time are equal faults." * However, if in doubt, it would be better to take a movement too slowly; but the best of all would be to take a movement correctly, upon which even musicians of highest standing can hesitate or differ in opinion, a fact which often occurs, and is partly the cause of the differences in interpretation of the same work by various conductors. The metronome settles the question when the composer has taken the pains to indicate the formula himself, which many contemporary composers wisely do. On the other hand, it is important to place a merely relative confidence in the

* Schumann.

metronomic instructions applied to works anterior to the invention of the metronome and its vulgarisation, for such indications can only be the work of an editor, or proof-reader, and therefore have no authority. Now, from the researches of one of my colleagues,* it is clearly shown that although the first idea of a chronometer applicable to music dates from the end of the Seventeenth Century, it was not until 1816 that the actual metronome, the inventor of which was Maëlzel, made its official appearance, and could have been practically adopted. With regard to metronomic signs therefore, only those must be considered sure and certain that apply to works after this date; the others, if they are not simply fanciful, may relate to some apparatus of the same species, long since fallen into disuse, and whose scale, now unknown, may have differed as much from the metronome of our time as the thermometer of Celsius, Réaumur and Fahrenheit differ from one another.

A care for firmness in the rhythm, like the effort towards a beautiful sonority, which, properly speaking, have nothing to do either with technique or style, although they are indispensable auxiliaries to both, should be constantly present in the mind of the young virtuoso, who, moreover, if he is provided with a certain dose of artistic sentiment, will not be slow to appreciate its value and incomparable importance.

Therefore, after a certain number of years, which varies quite as much in accordance with the nature of

* Paul Rougnon, *Dictionnaire musical des locutions étrangères, suivi d'une Étude sur le métronome.*

the instrument as the aptitude of the pupil, the amount of time devoted to work every day, and the ability of the teacher, the period for the higher or finishing studies will arrive.

Here many things will change. The unity of the instruction, so desirable in the beginning, has now lost its preponderant utility; if we can still keep the first teacher, he should be kept; but if he has become insufficient, there would be no objection to taking one of a higher class; indeed this would often even prove an advantage by initiating the pupil into new methods of execution, showing him another manner of regarding interpretation, and making him realize the differences that can exist between two neighbouring schools.

The essential thing at present is to have to deal with a militant-virtuoso in the full activity of his powers, and the vigour of his talent, and the more brilliant an executant he is, the better he will be as a master, for what will be required of him will be to give explanations far less than to furnish examples; his teaching will consist especially in playing for his pupil, rarely entire pieces, but very frequently complete passages, a song, phrase, or a difficult passage, the beautiful expression, elevation of style, or boldness and perfection of execution of which the pupil will immediately try to reproduce; but this instruction will be incomplete unless, at the same time, his aim is to elevate the student's musical sentiment, inculcating æsthetical ideas and inspiring him with the love of the beautiful. It is for this reason, having ar-

rived at this point, that it has become essential to approach only an artist of great worth, one of those who know how to reveal the thought of the composer, by means of their own powerful interpretation, and thus make themselves veritable collaborateurs of genius.—Otherwise, it would be better not to leave the first teacher.

### III. Qualifications of a Teacher for Advanced Pupils, Reading and Ensemble-Playing

With regard to this finishing master, whether he be young or old, a man or a woman, of a character more or less pleasing, that is a matter of absolute indifference, provided he is a great artist as well as a virtuoso of the first order.

If we have the opportunity of coming across one of these complete artists, and if we can obtain regular lessons from him, it would be best to stop there and not seek any other direction in the future. But this is not always possible, for such natures are scarce and are found more frequently among those great wandering *virtuosi*, who, like comets, make only rare appearances of short duration and then fly to other skies, not caring in the matter of instruction to give anything more than a few fugitive and superficial counsels. No matter how brief these counsels may be, we should gather them religiously and endeavour to apply them and turn them to advantage, and then await the passage of another meteor, for changes, even though frequent, are no longer to be dreaded, as in the element-

ary studies; for pupils of a supple nature and quick intelligence, it is even a great element of progress, during the period of the higher studies, to see the same things thus presented under various aspects.

In the great centres, however, it often happens that there are to be found artists who are permanent, or rarely away, and who, possessing high attainments, consent more willingly to put the finishing touch to the accomplishments of ardent pupils who are already prepared for the advanced studies of *virtuoso-æsthetics*.

The young virtuoso should be reared in ideas of eclecticism. While holding preferences, which is now his right and his duty, he should not become the vassal of a certain manner, nor a style that is always the same, and with stronger reason, the study of a single composer,—an error somewhat frequent in a certain class of amateurs. He should have studied and should understand the works of every school, admire what they have to offer of the Beautiful, and know how to bring it out and place it in relief in his execution of it.

An original and graceful mind will know how to impress a special mark of distinction upon the smallest things; while identifying himself with the intimate thought of the composer, he will preserve his own individuality, and the fusion of these two characters will often give rise to effects of which the composer himself never dreamed.

It is all this that constitutes the *genius of interpretation*, the most beautiful thing, after that of production, that can exist. To make oneself in this way

thus, whilst relegating to the background all thought of personal success, the collaborator of the composer and the necessary bridge between him and the audience, constitutes the highest conception of the mission of an inspired virtuoso.

"Perhaps Genius alone can comprehend Genius!" Chopin frequently said, meaning certainly by this that a work conceived by a genius demands interpretation by a genius also,—a strong thought which we find again in George Sand, under a somewhat kindred form: "The divine mystery of an artist's thought reveals itself only to great sympathies," without being greatly astonished at such similar views being held by the genial musician-poet and the eminent writer. And it is among these enthusiastic artists whose sympathetic natures thus reveal to them the sacred mystery of the composer's thought that you must seek the guide who will initiate you into the deepest beauties of great interpretation, that ideal professor whose counsels are always elevated and philosophical, and who will know how to open your soul to the supreme joys of the artistic admiration,—contemplation and revelation of the great masterpieces. For, let there be no mistake, when once by the patient study of mechanical means, we have succeeded in breaking away from the rising above all difficulties, and considering them as a *quantité négligeable*, interpretation appears as the purest of all pleasures, one of the most intoxicating of all blisses.

I have already remarked that there are two things to work for in the study of an instrument,—technique

and style. I believe now it would be better to say that there are four: technique, style, reading, and the cultivation of the memory. To the first two we need not return. The art of reading well at sight, is, in general, acquired easily enough, upon all homophonous instruments (that is to say those from which only one sound is heard at a time), by means of the regular daily practice of half an hour or an hour. For the organ, the piano and the harp, which always utter several sounds simultaneously and have in consequence a very great number to be read, the difficulty increases proportionately. Therefore we shall return more particularly to this when speaking of these instruments. With regard to the others, only three recommendations are necessary: always choose pieces that are sufficiently easy and simple of execution to enable you to read them without stumbling; moreover, the professor should pick them out; always take the movement slower than indicated and maintain it by beating time with the foot, or counting in an undertone, according to the instrument; read along without ever stopping, no matter what happens. If you have really read very badly, if you have made too bad a mistake, carefully examine the passages that have presented such difficulties, and begin again a second time, never more than that. It is very good to read with an accompaniment; this is an exercise which two pupils can practice jointly, which makes it more attractive, but only on condition that they impose upon themselves the absolute law of abstaining from the least moment of halt. No one is a good

reader till he is able not only to read correctly, but when he knows how to give the spirit and the sentiment that belong to the work that is being read, as well as if it had previously been studied. It goes without saying that the reading at sight of certain works of great virtuosity remains inaccessible even to the ablest, no matter what any one says about it; nobody can pretend to read at sight an *Étude* of Paganini, or a *Rhapsodie* of Liszt.

Every instrumentalist, to be thorough, should be able to take his part in a concerted work and in an orchestra; and since he must play here in quite a different manner from that of a soloist, a new study is necessitated, which, however, is quite easy, in comparison with that of the instrument itself, but is none the less a special and perfectly distinct study. There are persons who can play a solo on the violin, flute, or oboe quite decently, yet who find themselves entirely out of their element when it comes to plunging into an *ensemble*. Here the ruling qualification is self-abnegation; knowing how to contribute one's exact share, and this at every moment and on every note, for the effect of the whole, without endeavouring to attract attention to oneself individually; to know how to be nothing but a useful citizen in this little model Republic, which the orchestra really is; to know how to maintain well one's place, and nothing but one's place; to know how to apply to this all the technical skill at one's disposal; this is a calm and serene pleasure, a veritable satisfaction to the conscience.

In Chamber-music, which is only the microcosm of

the orchestra, an orchestra reduced to its simplest expression, and of which the String Quartet is the purest and highest manifestation, each one preserves a greater individuality, and at times can afford scope for a certain spontaneity which is not misplaced but is indeed essentially opportune. It is he who has the floor; the others accompany him by adopting his opinions or by shaking their heads, by approving or opposing him. Next, it will be another's turn, the *rôles* will find themselves inverted: then the discussion closes in, becomes more animated, and may even degenerate into a dispute. The Quartet is a perpetual conversation, a dialogue full of wit, in which each of the interlocutors should *get inside the skin of his character*, as a consummate comedian does. Can you understand the interest that the study of such a style presents, in which only musicians of the first order have dared write, on account of the profound thought, the knowledge and the spirit of appropriateness that are necessary? Now, it is in this same order of ideas that are also conceived all the great works of Chamber-music, also called concerted music, the Duos and Sonatas for the piano and violin, or violoncello, the Trios for these three instruments united, the Quartets for piano, violin, viola and violoncello, the Quintets; and others in which participate the wind instruments, flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon, each, while contributing to the general effect, having its word to say, its personality to preserve.

But to give oneself up to such delights, it will be

perceived that one must be rivetted to one's instrument as a buffalo hunter is fastened upon his horse, making only one with him, fear nothing, and be able to concentrate thought exclusively upon questions of interpretation.

This study therefore complements the instrumental studies, and it is with this that we will end this rapid general view, before passing to what concerns each instrument considered separately.

However, we should observe that if what precedes concerns all the instruments, that does not mean to say that everything, excepting the fundamental and elementary precepts, can be applied exactly and equally to each one of them. We have just now compared the orchestra to a sort of little musical Republic; now, in this imaginary Republic, as in all others, all the citizens are far from being equal sharers, equality is but a vain word. If it is easy for a violinist, or a violoncellist, to push to the furthest extreme the studies in style that we have just described, it is thanks to the incalculable number of masterpieces with which the great masters of all the epochs and of all the Schools (the German School more than any other) have endowed the library of stringed instruments, which no instrument can ever exhaust.—The difficulty becomes already much greater for the wood-wind instruments, whose musical literature, with a few very brilliant but too rare exceptions, is, alas! most restricted. They are able, nevertheless, to participate in the execution of Chamber music in a certain number of beautiful and great works, but the

opportunity does not present itself often.—But when we come to the brass, there is nothing, and we truly ask how can these unhappy disinherited ones ever form their taste and acquire any skill in the art of shading. No honourable repertory exists for them, they are condemned by the force of circumstances to revolve perpetually in a circle of ineptitudes, and when they come for the first time to take their part in an orchestra, it is also the first time that they make music.

It would not be possible then for these to put all our principles into practice. They can supply them by frequenting good concerts, and still better by the supplementary study of some other instrument (their own occupying but little time each day) which will permit them to familiarize themselves with the high ideals of style and interpretation, the noble side of art. This initiation, which for others would be too superficial, would be sufficient for them, when one considers that their part in the orchestra, notwithstanding its importance, exacts less cunning and personality than that of the artist belonging to the other groups, which up to a certain point restores the equilibrium.

An excellent thing, which greatly aids the study of any instrument whatsoever, is the practice of teaching. One learns much by teaching others what one has recently learned, and by being forced to demonstrate it by means of examples. It is then good advice to give young artists, already somewhat advanced, in telling them to try to procure a few little beginners, so as to serve their apprenticeship in teach-

ing. This counsel is above all addressed, let it be understood, to those who are destined for an artist's profession, and who will be, in consequence, so much the better professors the sooner they have commenced to prepare themselves for it; but it can be followed with equal advantage by the simple *dilettante*, who, apart from the progress that will result from it for himself, will have the satisfaction of doing good about him by giving gratuitous lessons to young children who have not the means of paying for them. To say that he would be the most desirable and ideal professor for them would be a contradiction of all that we have already said, since he will necessarily lack experience, at least at first; but by taking great care and seeking the aid of his own professor, as well as being very conscientious, he can often inculcate healthful elementary ideas. To this we shall return elsewhere.

Another point to be considered as indispensable, is that of accustoming oneself to play in public at an early age. But we must try, as far as possible, not to approach this practical exercise, which is, so to speak, the sanction of all the rest, except under satisfactory, or at least propitious, conditions. Without putting any idiotic pretentiousness into it, but quite the opposite, the young pupil should proceed in this matter proportionately with the same precautions with which a consummate artist, who is conscious of his worth and does not intend to compromise it, surrounds himself. From an entirely different point of view, the *débutant*, who is inexperienced and still subject to all kinds of awkwardness, should know how to

avoid all the causes that might be of a nature (by depriving him of any part of his faculties) to hinder him from doing full honour to the little knowledge he has. Then, this will also be a good habit formed for the day when he himself will have become a talented virtuoso.

He should therefore refrain, like a true artist and as much as possible, from playing before an unintelligent audience that talks instead of listens, which would accustom him to neglect his execution; if he is a pianist, he should refrain from playing upon a bad piano, a piano in a bad condition, or one out of tune; if he plays an instrument, he should refrain from playing any except his own, at least unless he is perfectly well acquainted with it and is certain that he knows how to make it obey him; and also from playing with a bad accompaniment, or without having rehearsed, which is exceedingly imprudent; if concerted or ensemble music is in question, he should refrain from playing in company with performers of an inferior order, in contact with whom he cannot fail to acquire bad habits, for we do not learn elegant manners by frequenting the society of low people; over and above all, he should always refuse to play cheap music, or music that is badly written, or of bad taste (not to be confused with light music), even if he is asked for it.

Apart from these harmful circumstances, he should always eagerly seize every opportunity of putting what he has learned into practice, at first, preferably in an intimate and very restricted circle, and then progress to a larger audience composed of heterogene-

ous elements, thus gradually preparing himself to confront the great public to which all the manifestations of art are finally destined and addressed.

Now, we will pass in review the most profitable way to study every instrument.

For the convenience of classification, we will begin with the keyboard-instruments; the stringed-instruments played with the bow and plucked will follow; and we will finish with the wind-instruments.

We will endeavour to make the particular requirements of each perfectly clear, as well as what can be expected from it and the amount of work necessary to acquire the mastery of it, as also,—which is the real object of this book,—the best manner of pursuing any study in accordance with the end intended to be attained.

## IV. The Piano

Of all instruments, the one the study of which can be undertaken with advantage the earliest, is most certainly the Piano.

From the age of six, sometimes indeed, of five years, a well-balanced child, with good health and ready intelligence and being already able to read well (this is the simplest and the best criterion) is in perfect condition to embark upon this study, if it is presented to him as it should be at this age, as a pleasure, I will even say as an amusement, a kind of recreation, and not, as too frequently happens, as a task.

Contrary to a generally accepted idea, it is very important that the child should receive his first notions

from a good master, considering that these first notions will form the solid basis of all his future knowledge, and hence that it is desirable that they should have an artistic and attractive character, the impressions of which may be preserved for ever.

Let us then say plainly that it is false economy on the part of parents to hunt for petty teachers of the lowest order and without experience, on the pretext that it is only a question of teaching a beginner. To teach beginners is perhaps more difficult than anything else; and, moreover, it is in a great measure upon the initial direction given in the first hours of their studies that will depend the result into which will finally blossom, when they have reached maturity, all the pains they take themselves and that are taken for them. "We think that it requires a very varied knowledge and a very complete musical education to be a good elementary teacher, for higher teaching is fruitful in results only when the basis of the first studies has been solidly established." * It is not necessary, however, that the teacher should be an exceptional virtuoso, that would be another exaggeration, but he should be a sufficiently able executant to let the pupil hear the desired effect and to show him how he can produce it. "Every art is best taught by example." † This is so much the more to be desired since it is bad for the pupil to have his guidance changed too early, and it would be better to

* A. Marmontel, *Conseils d'un Professeur.*

† "*Tout art est mieux enseigné par l'exemple*" *(Epigraphe du Gradus ad Parnassum de Clementi).*

keep the same throughout his studies of the piano, or at least for a long time, until the period of the studies of high virtuosity, when it may even be good for him to try different kinds of teaching and to take note for himself of the methods of various schools, as we have already remarked. It is important also that the master should have had a good teacher himself, so that there is no risk of his propagating false principles; but above everything else, he must be an artist, with an appreciation of the Beautiful, having a horror of bad composers, and incapable of making a bad selection in the works he puts into the hands of his pupils; an erudite musician, knowing his classics and capable of inculcating in the child, whenever the occasion offers, healthful notions of æsthetics; he must possess, particularly at the beginning, a patience and a gentleness proof against everything, so as to be able to repeat the same thing a hundred times without becoming impatient; he must also have authority without pedantry, moral influence, a pleasing face, an amiable character, calling forth affection but repelling familiarity. These last qualities are found more frequently, and are more natural, in women and young girls. We see that if the choice of a teacher is important, it is not easy, particularly when we do not live in a large centre of population, and that it merits serious attention.

When once the professor has been judiciously chosen and enters upon his duties, it is important to leave him entire master of the situation, and not to impose any fetters upon him; to help him as far as

possible, if it is his pleasure, and in the way that pleases him, but not to attempt to modify his ideas, his programme, or his way of teaching. It is like taking on a pilot, to whom the captain, while preserving his authority, relinquishes the care of taking the ship into port. Two sets of orders are never worth anything.

Another matter upon which it is bad judgment to economize is the choice of an instrument. A good little upright piano, by a conscientious maker, new or second-hand, but in very good condition, is the best. A large concert grand, or an old instrument that works badly, would be equally prejudicial to the success of the studies. In reality, one of the first things that one ought to seek here, even with the novice, is a good quality of tone, a beautiful sonority; it is then necessary to put into his hands a sufficiently sensitive tool to betray the defects and awkwardnesses of his touch. On the other hand, a too sonorous instrument would deafen and confuse him, and would be too difficult for him to manage. What he wants is a good family horse, fairly spirited, and not an old hack nor a blooded steed. Moreover, it is necessary that his piano should always be kept in perfect tune, so as not to make his ear false if it is naturally true, and to correct it if it is slightly defective.

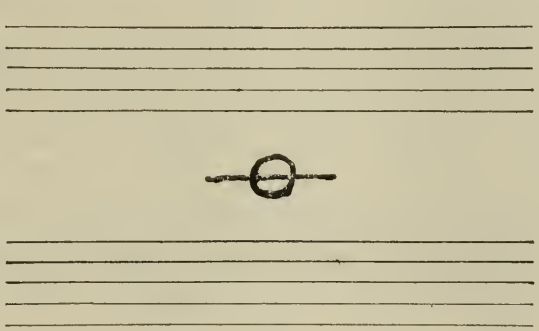
People think that at first any kind of a piano and a mediocre teacher are sufficient. These are two gross errors.

After the age that we have assigned to him, it is clear that the study of the piano may be undertaken

at the same time as that of *solfeggio*. If one wishes to proceed thus, it is best absolutely to confound them for some time, to such an extent that the child cannot distinguish in his lesson which is the piano and which is *solfeggio*, and sees only one thing,—music.

Here is about the type of the first lesson of this nature.

You write for him upon a sheet of paper which you put on the desk:



and you say to him: this note is called *do;* write me a *do*.—He should copy the note, putting its name above it.

Then, you show him on the piano the corresponding key, upon which you write with the pencil the same sign, saying: "This is the same *do;* play *do*."—He should play the note.

Then you say to him: "Listen well to this *do;* now sing it after me." You sing it.—And then he should sing it.

In this way, the idea of the note read or written, that of the key and the tone that it produces, that of the note that he hears and the note that he sings be-

come incrusted at the same time in his mind, where they melt into a whole which is for him the note *do* under three forms,—the trinity of the *do*.

This may be the extent of the first lesson.

In the following ones, in starting again with *do*, you can teach him several other notes, always by making him read them, write them, play them, hear them and sing them, by making groups of them, which will be fragments of the scale or little airs. You must point out to him that the notes above the *do* are written in the clef of (sol) G and those below in the clef of (fa) F, the last of which he cannot sing as easily as the others (first notion of the compass of the voice) and finally, having started from this basis, you can make him copy his little exercises and sing them in *solfeggio*, before playing them upon the piano, in such a way as to develop the little musician and the little pianist at the same time, and so that there will never be separated in his little infantile intelligence the three ideas of *the written note*, *the played note*, and *the note that is sung or heard*, which should form an irreducible whole, *which is the truth for every musician*.

It must be well understood that this can only last for a time, and that the two studies will have to be pursued separately although side by side.

At the beginning, especially if the child is very young, the lessons should be very short but very close together; the ideal plan would be a quarter of an hour every day, without any work on the part of the child alone, and without even allowing him to amuse

himself upon the piano in the interval, so as not to acquire bad habits, which would retard his progress. At the end of a few months, you can separate the lessons to every two days, and increase their length to half an hour, if this child is sufficiently attentive and careful to work alone in the intervening days. It is scarcely until after two years of study that the pupil can profit by a lesson of an hour, repeated two or three times a week, working an hour or two every day. In the course of the studies, one should keep on increasing the intervals between the lessons. Towards the age of fifteen or sixteen years, one lesson a week, or even one a fortnight, should suffice, and later, it would be best only to take one a month. To make them more frequent has the bad result of depriving the pupil of some of his spontaneity and individuality.

The daily work should keep constantly increasing until it reaches about four hours a day (very exceptionally five or six, in several sittings, and never more than two hours in succession), always attaching great importance, and this from the first months, I should almost say the first days of study, to obtaining a beautiful sonority, a good quality of tone,—something inestimable and which is almost entirely dependent upon the first habits acquired; "the tone obtained from the same piano varies, according to the suppleness and the delicacy of touch of the artist, according to his individual nature and the degree of his manual dexterity." * When this principle has

* A. Marmontel, *Histoire du Piano.*

been neglected at the beginning, a work that is often long and difficult is exacted later.

It is often said: pianists have an advantage over all others in finding their tones already made. This is not absolutely true, since every pianist has a different tone which causes him to be recognized.

" One of the first conditions for obtaining breadth of execution, a beautiful sonority and a great variety in the production of tone, is to divest oneself of all stiffness. It is then indispensable to have in the forearm, the wrists and the fingers, as much suppleness and varied inflections as a clever singer possesses in his voice." *

*Generally speaking, people work too much*—this remark will make me friends with all pupils,—but in general also *they work badly.* Here, as in so many things, quality is preferable to quantity.

To work well and profitably, the principal thing is to bring a sustained attention to that which we are doing, and not to allow ourselves to be distracted by any external preoccupation; to work slowly: *Chi va piano, va sano, et chi va sano va lontano,*†—the thing which is the most useful of all, and very often also the most difficult to obtain.

Again I quote from Thalberg, who was one of the most enchanting of *virtuosi:* " We will remark that in general people play too fast and that they think they have proved a great deal by displaying great

* S. Thalberg, Preface to *L'Art du chant appliqué au piano.*

† He who goes slowly, goes wisely, and he who goes wisely, goes far.—Italian proverb.

agility with the fingers. To play too fast is a capital offence. In a moderate movement, the conduct of a simple fugue of three or four voices and its interpretation, in correctness and style, exact and prove more talent than the execution of the most brilliant, rapid and complicated piano piece. It is much more difficult than one would think not to hurry and not to play fast." * And a little further on he adds: "One recommendation that we should not neglect, is to put great sobriety into the movements of the body and great tranquillity into the arms and hands, never to attack the piano from too great a height, to listen constantly while playing, to interrogate and to be severe upon ourselves as to our playing, and to learn to judge ourselves. In general, people work too much with their fingers and too little with their intelligence."

Another very useful thing is not to forget what we have learned while we are learning something else, which becomes the labour of the Danaïdes. I fully believe that Jacotot, a celebrated educator of the last century, was the first to formulate that admirable axiom, applicable to all branches of instruction, and consequently to music, but in a way quite special to the piano because of the prodigious quantity of beautiful works with which composers have endowed the literature of this instrument and with which pupils are consequently wont to furnish their minds: "One would always be more learned with what one has forgotten than with what one has retained." How true

* S. Thalberg.

that is of everything; and who is there among us, even the most learned, who would not be benefited by recovering the remembrance of a host of things that he has once known and forgotten, abandoning in exchange the paltry baggage of what has remained in his memory! "Science is nothing but remembrance," Montaigne has said; to know anything to-day counts for nought, if to-morrow we no longer know what we knew yesterday. To learn without being able to recollect is equivalent to writing upon shifting sands.

It is then necessary to cultivate the memory, to accustom yourself to learn everything by heart (I say *everything* without exception, exercises as well as the works of the masters), and to forget as little as possible, nothing, if you can help it. And this is not very difficult, if you proceed with method and perseverance; here are the means, I hand over the secret: from the moment that you are able to play correctly and properly any piece whatsoever, be it *étude* or *morceau*, you should learn it by heart, so thoroughly as to be able to repeat it exactly without having the text before your eyes (for some this will be very easy, for others it will require great effort at first, but it will all come in time, *it is nothing but an acquired habit*, the experience has been proved with thousands of pupils at the Paris Conservatoire alone, and to my knowledge); having done this, you must force yourself to play this piece over again, on the following days, alternately by heart and with the music, once, which is a matter of a few minutes. During this time, learn something else, which must then

be submitted to the same rule, but now piece No. 1 will keep itself in the memory by being played only every two days, once with the music and once by memory. When a third piece has been learned and likewise got encased in the memory, piece No. 2, in its turn, will not need to be repeated more than twice every two days, and No. 1 every four days, and so on. You will very easily manage (when I say you, I mean by that *everybody*, all those who are willing to take the trouble) to retain in the memory and in the fingers pieces that you play only once a month and even less frequently, provided you have proceeded progressively, by gradually distancing the repetition to six, eight, ten and fifteen days, relatively to the order in which the aforesaid pieces have been learned, and then every two months, three months, six months, etc., submitting them however to a new supplementary study if you perceive that the memory is in danger of failing. When a musical work has remained in the memory for about a year, it is very seldom that it ever escapes. To obtain this result, which is so desirable and so delightful, the whole thing is to act systematically; it is true that after some time, this requires you to keep in mind a veritable catalogue, but this does not interfere much with other occupations. I have very often seen modest amateurs without the slightest effort register and retain in their memories and fingers repertories of from 150 to 200 pieces always ready, among which, if they had a few of Chopin's *Nocturnes* or Mendelssohn's *Romances*, pieces of a few pages only, there also figured entire

Sonatas and Concertos, which were regarded in their catalogue as simple units. Better than that, I have seen people play without the slightest hesitation (these were artists) with the orchestra and from memory, Concertos which they had learned ten or twenty years previously, had never seen since and believed they had forgotten, but which had been submitted, at the proper time, to the rule that I have just described. This appears prodigious, but it is, nevertheless, very simple; it is sufficient to proceed methodically and systematically, and to absorb thoroughly this truth: *it is far more useful to retain what we have learned, than to be constantly learning new things.* One hour a day devoted to this perpetual review, is broadly sufficient and not in the least tedious, since we are giving ourselves a veritable little concert.

Apart from this question of repertory, so important to the pianist, whether he be artist or amateur, there is another that absolutely obliges him to cultivate and develop his memory. It even presents a rather curious fact. About fifty years ago, all good piano teachers were opposed to their pupils playing four notes in succession by heart, for fear of their altering anything of the composer's text, and required them always to have the *music before their eyes;* this was an absolute principle. They were right. The teachers of to-day, while quite as careful about the exact reproduction of the text, no longer think the same, but want to have everything *played by heart.* They are also right.

Why?

Because during the 200 odd years that the piano has existed,* the instrument and its literature, and the way of writing for it, have been changed from beginning to end. Until the time of Mozart and Beethoven's early years, its keyboard had a very restricted compass, of about five octaves and a half, which naturally the composer never dreamed of exceeding. Therefore their works were always written *under the hand*, and the glance can be easily shared between the keys and the music-book. There was not the slightest reason then in playing the piano to act otherwise than in playing any other instrument, and it was much wiser to keep the music before the eyes so as not to run the risk of going astray. That was very logical.

But since that time, and even before Beethoven's last years, the piano has been considerably enlarged, since its keyboard now embraces seven octaves and sometimes more. The composers have quite naturally profited by this expansion, by these new resources, and under the influence of the Chopins, Liszts and all the moderns, the manner of writing has quite changed. It goes by leaps and bounds, putting the whole instrument into vibration at once, by means of the pedal; the body itself often has to be in movement, and it would be very difficult or impossible to keep the eyes fixed on the music while they are engrossed in watching the hands and looking at the keys. The only way to play modern music then, is by heart; and when this habit is once acquired we

* It was invented about 1717.

also prefer to play in the same way the classic works, which, being more simply written and containing fewer notes, find their way more easily into the mind.

This custom has so thoroughly passed into practice, that a pianist who plays with his notes now looks as unnatural and ill at ease as an actor who should read his part on the stage; without speaking of that awkward complication arising from the need of always having somebody beside you to turn the pages.

"You must not only be able to play your pieces, but you should be able to solfa them without the piano; and your imagination should be cultivated to the point of retaining the harmony that is given to a melody quite as well as the melody itself." *

When we attentively examine the matter, we perceive that so far as music is concerned there really exist three kinds of memory, or, it would be better to say, three distinct manifestations of the memory: the memory of the ear, of the eyes, and of the fingers, which can exist separately, and thus give satisfactory results, but whose union alone constitutes the perfect and truly desirable memory. This requires some explanation. The memory of the ear alone is sufficient to retain a melodic contour, or a series of chords, or even the two united; but it only registers the tones in the memory according to their relation to each other, and not according to their absolute and real pitch (with exceptions of extreme rarity); it is prone to transpose them involuntarily, indeed most of the time unconsciously, and it is in this that its imperfection

* Schumann.

consists; it also lacks precision; it is very nearly, but not quite, a memory, one that allows us approximately to remember an air heard while travelling, or a gifted amateur to play *a whole opera*, whose first representation he has attended, on the piano when he goes home, to the amazement of his friends,—and with good reason (I have never been a witness of this phenomenon, but I have been so often told about it!). It is a superficial and incomplete memory; although appreciable.

Infinitely superior is the memory of the eyes, however strange this may appear at first glance. He who possesses it, retains as graven on his mind the note itself, the printed note, even remembers the place it occupies on the page, and would be capable of copying from memory and reproducing upon the paper the work that he has studied sufficiently to have fathomed it to its depths, even were it an orchestral score, exactly as one would write a piece of verse or any bit of literature that is retained in the mind, word for word; at bottom, it is the same intellectual operation. This is the analytical memory, the memory of the true musician who knows how to listen with his eyes as well as with his ears, who makes no difference between the note written, the note sung or played and the note heard,—ever the same principle. It is this memory above all that we should try to acquire and develop by every possible means, as being the most precious of all. We can exercise it by applying ourselves assiduously to writing out by heart little fragments and short passages, which we have first spe-

cially studied with this end in view, and then others of greater length. There are cases, however, especially for the pianist, in complicated passages formed of many notes that succeed each other with extreme rapidity, where this intelligent and rational memory, which demands an effort of reflection, might find itself at fault. Then becomes valuable the mechanical and unthinking memory of the fingers, which correctly and faithfully accomplish their task like veritable automata, when they have been sufficiently trained, without any cerebral effort, and even while we may be thinking of something entirely different.

I do not know how physiology or the psychologist explains this phenomenon of dual thought-action, but it is indubitably real. There are some persons who can play for you a piece heavily charged with notes while listening to others talking around them and even taking part in the conversation. To assert that they put deep feeling into their playing at the same time, I should not dare.

And this is why I say that the complete, perfect and really desirable memory should be clothed in turn, and sometimes simultaneously, with these three forms: memory of the eyes, ear and fingers. If we possess one of these, we must train for the others; they will naturally aid each other.

More than any other instrumentalists, pianists should give their whole attention to the study of reading at sight, because of the great number of notes that they have to read, whether simultaneously or very rapidly. From the third year, at the latest, it

is necessary to devote a few moments every day to reading slowly things that are easy enough to be read without making any mistakes (I have already said this, but it cannot be repeated too often), without hesitating or stumbling, and even to putting in all the shading indicated; it is only on this condition that this study is profitable. Before reading any piece whatsoever, short or developed, you should go over it slowly, examining very particularly such passages as seem difficult; but once having started, you must never stop under any pretext whatsoever; it would be better to invent several notes, indeed even several bars, than to stop and begin again. You must possess "a complete absence of remorse for any mistake made," according to the pretty expression of Eugène Sauzay,* a celebrated violinist who was a perfect master of accompaniment as well as a man of wit and erudition. It is imperative to know how to divine from the figure what we have no time to read, and always to read ahead, at least one bar in slow movements, and several in pieces of a lively gait. To know how to read well, a thing precious above all else, is an accomplishment of combined intelligence, ability, and presence of mind. J. J. Rousseau said long ago in his dictionary: "All musicians pride themselves upon playing at sight, but there are very few who in this execution catch the spirit of the work, or who, even if they make no mistakes in the notes, do not at least give a wrong meaning in the execution."

* E. Sauzay, *École de l'accompagnement* (Firmin Didot, editeur, 1869).

With modern music, reading has become in itself a veritable art, and really a very difficult one.

Four-hand reading is very good practice, still better than with two pianos, whether with the teacher or with a partner of about the same skill.

The pianist should also be equally accustomed to the difficulties of transposition, more complicated for him than for any other instrumentalists, because he has infinitely more notes to read than they have. He should therefore train himself very early in transposing even exercises. Apart from the utility of knowing how to transpose, this study forms an excellent gymnastic exercise and helps to form a musician.

When we have acquired complete mastery of an instrument, and can play without having to pay attention to the minute details of execution, it is worth while to take *ensemble* lessons with a violinist or 'cellist (inaccurately called lessons of accompaniment, because the piano does not accompany more than it is accompanied, it is absolutely a concerted instrument); or we might even choose as a teacher the player of some entirely different instrument, but we should quickly come to the end of the catalogue of good works written for the piano and clarinet, flute, oboe, horn or bassoon, while the literature for the stringed instruments is nearly inexhaustible. After getting accustomed to playing with a single instrument, you can take up the study of Trios, Quartets, Quintets, etc., which is exceedingly interesting.

This interest lies very largely in the enormous num-

ber of masterpieces that the classic authors and a few contemporaries have written for Chamber-music, the most elevated form of pure music; partly also in the pleasure caused by the mingling of the *timbres*. The pianist here is obliged to play otherwise than as a soloist, to modify and frequently to diminish his tone, in order to assimilate and to ally himself with the other instruments, which he should never try to dominate except in particular passages where his part preponderates. Finally, it is an entirely special study.

It is also a very good exercise to accompany singers:—here the verb to accompany is in its place, meaning a complete abnegation, with the one desire of supporting the singer, aiding him and sometimes guiding him, without ever covering his voice. This talent of being a good accompanist is very rare, and one that always denotes an excellent musician, for it requires all the qualities of a virtuoso, and in addition a tact and a presence of mind that are very difficult to acquire.

In every kind of ensemble music, there can be no question of playing by heart. No matter how sure you may be of your memory, you cannot be responsible for the errors into which you may be led through the inadvertence of a partner.

Whether it is a question of the study of the piano, sight-reading or ensemble music, the foundation should always consist of classical music, or that of contemporary composers who have written in the classical style; for the primary or secondary instruction, it is also necessary to adhere to these; then a part of

the time should be given to modern music, but with extreme circumspection, and avoiding all vulgar and unhealthy compositions that unfortunately are rapidly multiplying. Schumann expresses himself clearly upon this subject: "You should never play bad compositions, nor listen to them, if you are not compelled to." I believe that this is forcible enough. Elsewhere, he goes still further and seems to invest the pupil with the somewhat excessive functions of a severe censor: "Never spread abroad bad compositions, on the contrary help to suppress them with energy." The pupil should not yet trust entirely to his own discernment; to a great extent it is in this choice that the tact of the professor is shown. The works of Schumann, Chopin and their followers of the Romantic School, demanding more maturity, should not figure in the programme of any one before the age of fifteen or sixteen except as *hors-d'œuvres* and as pieces for occasional ambitious flights; up to this period, the pure classic Germans must be studied exclusively, notably Haydn, Mozart, Bach, Handel, Beethoven, Weber and Mendelssohn (for *études*, Cramer and Clementi, in his marvellous collection of *Gradus ad Parnassum*); for a stronger reason, Liszt and the school of transcendent virtuosity will be reserved for the finishing touch of the studies and should not be touched before the age of eighteen or twenty.

Here, as everywhere else, there may be exceptions, extraordinarily precocious natures; it is for the professor to judge of these; but also not to allow himself to be deceived by appearances, nor carried away

by the desire to *give pleasure* to his pupils or to their parents; he should represent wisdom and prudence.

Upon this subject, it will not be out of place to put an end to that misunderstanding, that false notion of words and things, that for many young pupils makes *classic* the synonym for tedious, while *modern* suggests the idea of what is amusing. It is impossible to imagine a more complete error. Among the ancients as among our contemporaries, there are composers who are gay and others who are more profound and more serious; sometimes even, *often* would be better, the same composer alternately assumes the two aspects. If Bach is austere in his fugues, that does not prevent him from writing gavottes and other pieces in an alert and joyous style; there is no music that is more delightful and witty, more tender and playful than that of Mozart and Haydn, more warm, passionate and dramatic than that of Beethoven. We must also take into consideration that what we call *in musical matters* the classics, are not strictly speaking *ancients*, they are the moderns of yesterday consecrated by admiration, who directly gave birth to the style of to-day. If we say that every well ordered study should begin with the pure classics, it is to confine ourselves in this chapter to considerations of dry pedagogy, and not embarrass ourselves with questions of æsthetics that will find their place elsewhere, because the classic school initiates us progressively into the present manner of writing, and leads us logically towards it, while the modern school, which is its outgrowth, could not serve to lead us to

the old Masters. This at least is the principal reason to be considered by those pupils who desire to follow a normal progress; professors of some little experience will be able to find several others which there is no need here to indicate to them.

As soon as the young pupil begins to play properly several little pieces and knows them by heart, it is indispensable to accustom him to play them before people, without any airs and without waiting to be begged, which is the worst possible taste. This should first happen before one's own family and a few intimate friends who are kindly disposed (it is not a treat that is offered to them, it is a service that is demanded of them), then gradually before more numerous audiences. At this age, a child does not know what fear is, of that stupid and paralyzing thing not a trace is known, and this habit of playing before people is formed quite naturally and is never lost. Later, on the contrary, timidity, which is nothing but a form of self-love, comes into play, and the greatest amount of form and ceremony is required to induce the young virtuoso to play before those friends who are the most kindly disposed towards him. This is absurd, but it is so, above all with young girls. Now, it is absolutely necessary to avoid this pretentious shyness, and the most certain way is to take it in hand at an early period. Music is before everything else an art that belongs to society, and the executant, whether artist or amateur, it matters little, has no reason for existence except when someone is listening to him, someone whom he is trying to

make participate in his sensations of art. He who never plays except for himself alone would be above all a perfect egoist in the first place, and, secondly, to speak the truth, he would not even need to learn the mastery of his instrument, it would suffice for him to learn to read music fluently in order to satisfy his own pleasure.

Many kinds of apparatus have been invented with the purpose of developing, by methods of gymnastics, the strength and suppleness of the fingers: the *Dactylion* of Henri Herz, the *Chirogymnaste* of Henri Martin, the *Veloce-mano*, the leaden rings, the hand-guides (chiroplast), the *dumb pianos* with progressive stiffness, and many others which would look terrible if they figured in the museum of instruments of torture at Nuremberg. All these mechanical devices are detestable or inefficacious, and I only speak of them here for the sake of strongly discouraging their use. With means of this nature, employed against my will, many of my pupils have gravely compromised their progress; one of them, Mr. Louis H—— of St. Louis, Missouri, by making use of an extraordinary and complicated apparatus which he made himself and with which he slept to force his fingers further and further apart, succeeded in crippling them completely.

A similar mishap had already occurred to Robert Schumann: with the aim of improving his technique, and unknown to his most intimate friends, he took it into his head to tie down his third finger firmly, while exercising the four others. The result was that the

third finger was attacked by paralysis, which soon put it out of service, and paralysis progressively attacked the entire hand. All these machines must be deliberately rejected, for when not dangerous they are useless.

Certain auxiliary studies should be taken along with that of the piano. Just as, during the primary period, we must consider *solfeggio* as indispensable, and pursue this study long and seriously, it is well that, having once gained a step higher, the young pianist should possess some notions of harmony; superficial notions, if you please, for the amateur who is only trying to gain a more complete understanding of the works he is studying, but notions that must be infinitely more extended for the artist who intends to develop himself in the art of interpretation, and who may, moreover, one day or other be also a composer, which very frequently happens and demonstrates a fact, which we shall have occasion to speak of later,—the influence of the instruments of the keyboard upon musical inspiration and fecundity.

This study of harmony is not imposed upon any other instrumentalist with the same character of usefulness as upon the pianist. In reality, the piano, the polyphonic instrument, *par excellence*, is the one which by its very construction is able to produce the greatest number of simultaneous sounds (with the exception of the grand organ), that which admits of the greatest complications, various parts that are entangled, combining with one another superimposed melodies that form counterpoint, chords, or arpeggios

bristling with accidentals which are not always easy to read correctly or to interpret well, unless we have the power of making a quick analysis, and thus penetrating and divining the intention of the author. A pianist is not complete unless he is also a harmonist, were it only for the sake of being able to rectify, in case of need, the mistakes in printing that are always found in even the best expurgated editions of works so complex as are those which are written to-day for the piano. But this is the least of its uses. To know how to understand and appreciate the beauty of the works which he interprets is indispensable in order that he may execute them properly, for by execution we do not mean merely a correct interpretation, but an interpretation that is intelligent, interesting and elevated, which cannot be attained without taking their structure and harmonic framework into account.

Despite an old prejudice which seems to be disappearing, it is not at all hurtful for a pianist to play the organ, even if he has no idea of becoming an organist. This prejudice may have had some justification formerly, when the organ keys were very stiff and hard to work; up to a certain point, they might make the touch heavy and deprive it of some of its delicacy; but nothing of this is to be feared to-day, for the manufacturers are able to render the touch of the organ as light as that of the best pianos.

This, moreover, is exactly Schumann's opinion: "Do not neglect any opportunity of practicing on the organ; there is no instrument so efficacious in cor-

recting the errors or the habits of a bad musical education."

What the organ teaches you is to avoid a skipping, dry, superficial and unstable method of playing; and also, inversely, the heavy and slovenly method of those who drag their fingers over the keys, neglecting to let them recover at the proper time, for these two faults are intolerable; it is like a microscope that magnifies all defects, showing them in their most hideous aspect. It teaches integrity of technique.

Everybody has not a Grand Organ at his disposal; but a Harmonium, which can render a similar service, is more frequently met with. Play upon this instrument (or a Grand Organ) a Bach fugue from the *Well-Tempered Clavier* for example, or a piece of Handel's, having previously studied them carefully upon the piano where they seemed to be correctly rendered, and you will be amazed at the number of unsuspected mistakes that you will discover, notes released too soon, held too long, unevennesses, gaps, etc. This will make you more careful about your rendering before you try a new experiment.

Finally, it is necessary that the pianist, without consequent conceit, should realize that, by the very nature of his instrument, he is able to become a more perfect musician than any other virtuoso. None, in reality, finds himself confronted with more complications in rapid passages—I am not speaking of the material difficulties,—no one else has to make several melodic parts heard simultaneously, nor to bring out a song with one hand while with the other, and very

often the same, he must preserve a relative but real interest in figures of accompaniment, arpeggios, or contrapuntal formulæ. The literature of the piano, in works of the highest style, is the most complex of all musical literatures. By its compass, that is greater than that of the orchestra,* by its power and by the infinite variety of its effects, the piano authoritatively seizes the preponderant *rôle*, wherever it is found.

In Chamber-music, in String Quartets, Quintets, Septets, with or without wind-instruments, where there is no piano, it is implicitly agreed that the first violin takes the lead; it gives the signal of attack, it indicates the combination shadings, the *ralléntandos*, the organ-points, finally it commands, and this suits it, because there must always be a leader, and it is well fitted for this part. But if the piano takes a part, the first violin, while preserving the attitude of command habitual to it, finds itself forced to take into account this new partner whose force of will is unequalled; it is the latter now that imposes its time and its shading, and this without effort, by the sole fact that it is irresistible, representing an orchestra in itself, with which, moreover, it can maintain a struggle, as happens in *Concertos*. If each instrument taken by itself can be compared to a military unit, the piano is a whole army corps.

But I am wrong to make use of such comparisons, since we can find better ones without going outside of

* The piano descends six notes below the double-bass and rises a third above the flute, extremities of the classic orchestra.

the musical domain. Everybody has heard Hungarian orchestras with their keen and strident *cembalo,* that ancestor of the piano, which gives to them such an individual character of precision, clearness and nervous force; here, as elsewhere, it is the first violin, the only one that is played standing, that directs the band and plays the part of the conductor; all the others obey it, following it with most amusing facility into the rhythmic by-ways that give to Hungarian music so strange and so typical a character, all follow, even the *cembalo;* but if the latter took a fancy to rob the leader of its authority and modify the interpretation to its own taste, it would carry everything before it, not one would be able to liberate itself from the communicative power of that metallic and perpetual hammering, and the unhappy leader would find itself in the annoying situation of a shepherd who is not in accord with his dog. And it would have to give in.

This is exactly what would happen in Chamber-music if the pianist did not know how to restrain himself, make himself flexible and conduct himself far more as a musician than as a virtuoso, although a great deal of skill is required of him in order to manage to subdue his piano, which is really nothing but a *keyed cembalo,** and prevent it from showing its lion's claws, and asserting its dominating strength. Only very great artists can succeed in maintaining the balance without effacing themselves in an exaggerated manner and attenuating without annihilating the sound, which would be equally harmful.

* *Clavi-cembalo,* clavecin.

An easy experiment will clearly demonstrate the material preponderance of the piano in Chamber-music. Get somebody to play, entirely alone, the violin, viola, or violoncello part of any piece of ensemble music whatsoever: you will gain no idea of what the combination of the instruments will produce. Get somebody to play, also by itself, the piano part of the same piece, and immediately, with a very slight effort of the imagination, you will be able to divine what will be the general effect by reconstructing approximately, with your mind, the other missing parts.

When we reduce the piano to the apparently modest part of accompanist, whether for an instrumental solo or for an operatic aria, it becomes a miniature orchestra of which the pianist is the conductor. Awkwardly employed, it can overwhelm, annihilate, or totally rout the unhappy soloist, whilst in capable hands, it supports and guides him, brings out his good points, shows him the right road when he strays, and becomes his most precious auxiliary, the artificer of his success. The singer is always at his ease when he is accompanied by the composer, because the composer is always an artist before he is a pianist. More than any other musician, must the accompanist possess presence of mind, *sang-froid*, and the sense of what is appropriate. He can ruin all, or save all.

Hence the importance that the most accomplished singers attach to having always a good accompanist, and, as often as possible, *their own* accompanist, without whom they feel as if they were deserted and disabled.

I hope now that I have made completely clear the importance of the piano in whatever service it may be employed, and the consequent absolute necessity (in order intelligently to manipulate so energetic a mechanism, which, in inexperienced hands can so easily become a disturber) of possessing sound knowledge of technique and æsthetics.

At a period when thousands of young pianists possess an inconceivable finger dexterity, it is not uninteresting to remind them of the true mission of the simple and the beautiful, that of charming and not of astounding the audience, of playing less for show and more for the heart. This secret, which reveals the true artist, can only be learned by the study of the great masters, aided by hearing, as often as possible, great *virtuosi*,—those who in addition to the prestige of execution possess a high intelligence in matters of art. It is also necessary to know how to listen attentively to good singers, for they can often serve as models, if not counsellors. "One can learn much from singers, but it will not do to accept all their counsels," says Schumann. The great fault of the piano, a fault inherent to its nature, is dryness; it cannot sustain the tone, and if any one ever succeeds in giving this faculty to it, as has several times been attempted already, it will be the piano no longer, but a new instrument. It is then for the pianist, by the force of his art, to lessen and make this characteristic imperfection forgotten, by trying to imitate the vocal inflections of singers; this is why he should listen to them attentively, study and assimilate their

methods, and try to imitate them or come as near it as possible. "The best advice that we can give to persons who occupy themselves seriously with the piano is to learn, to study and to analyze the beautiful art of singing. With this end in view, we should never neglect an opportunity of hearing great artists, whatever may be their instrument, and above all the great singers; from the very beginning and in the first stage of our accomplishment, we should know how to surround ourselves with good models." *

For this imitation, a great help to success in producing the *illusion* of tones that are sustained or swelled, is the judicious use of the pedals. Of these the great majority of amateur pianists, and, what is more to be regretted, a great number of artists do not know how to avail themselves. "In the use of pedals, which play so important a part in execution, we should take the greatest care never to mix dissimilar harmonies and thus produce disagreeable dissonances. There are pianists who make such an abuse of the pedals, or rather they use them with so little logic, that their sense of hearing is perverted and they have lost the appreciation of pure harmony." Now, who is it that expresses himself thus? It is still Thalberg, that is to say the man who, with Chopin, carried to the utmost limit of ability the art of using the pedals. "The greatest number of pupils," the learned master, Marmontel, also remarks upon this subject, "to whom the use of the loud pedal is permitted, make use of it to beat the time"—

* Thalberg.

(we have already mentioned one frequent cause of this grotesque use)—" or, better, put it down and never let it go. This produces a frightful cacophony, to the affliction of all musicians of taste." *

It would be better to abstain entirely from using the pedal rather than employ it at random; and in truth, in all classic music before the Beethoven period, it should be left alone. In modern music, on the contrary, it is indispensable; but it is necessary to learn how to make it serve you and never allow it to produce confusion and discord: " The art of the pedal does not consist in knowing how to put it down, but how to take it off." † This is indeed a truth, the importance of which too few pianists comprehend.

It is certain that the study of harmony contributes to uproot these habits, as vicious as they are anti-artistic.

Formerly, and not so very long ago either, it was the custom to play a prelude on the piano. It even happened, as exaggeration followed, that under the pretext of preludes some performers thus improvised veritable pieces that never finished. This might be charming when the pianist was also a clever improviser; but, as this was the exception, more often people found themselves treated to lucubrations of a moment, containing more nonsense and rambling than anything else.

To obviate this regrettable condition, some naïve

* A. Marmontel, *Histoire du piano.*

† A. Lavignac, *L'École de la pédale.*

and well-intentioned professors had the idea of publishing, under the title of *Preludes, in all the major and minor keys*, some kinds of formulæ as hideous as they were pretentious, which the performer was to learn by heart and then be credited with improvising. It was grotesque. Another annoying thing about it was that these formulæ having to serve for every piece written in the same key, if there were several on the same programme, no matter what inspired air might be selected, the ridiculous trick was discovered.

A sudden change in fashion occurred, for fashion meddles with everything, and now preludes are out of date, which, after all, is much better.

There are three cases, however, in which it is still necessary to know how to improvise a few chords:

The first always presents itself in chamber-music, immediately after having given the A and just before beginning the piece.

The A is always needed for the instruments to tune by. If, after the horrible cacophony which is the result of this ceremony and which no one has yet found the means to avoid, we were immediately to attack the first chord in a piece in E-flat, for instance, the result for the sensitive hearer would be an impression of discord, very fleeting certainly, but nevertheless painful. Therefore, it is better to prepare him for the tonality by a few discreet chords that will efface from his memory the unavoidable *charivari* of the tuning of the instruments.

Second case: if one should have to play in suc-

cession several pieces in very different and dissimilar keys (a thing it would be better to avoid in making up the programme), it is judicious to weld them together, or to separate them, by a rapid modulation which will prevent the memory of the first piece from spoiling the beginning of the second. (This will be a little less of a shock.)

Third case: to give the key to a singer whom we are accompanying, especially if he has to begin with the first bar.

Reduced to its most simple expression, a few chords or a few *arpeggi*, the prelude can still be useful to give us an idea of the degree of sonority, resonance or deadness, of a hall, or of an instrument with which we are not yet familiar, and also to command silence and hush disturbing conversation.

In all these circumstances, no matter how brief may be the series of improvised chords, in order that they should be correct and not displeasing, and in order to avoid any clashing or awkwardness, the pianist must be versed in the practice of harmony to a greater degree than any of his associates who play on other instruments, and who have never, or but very rarely, to manage combined notes.

Everything that tends to develop the musical spirit and the initiative sense is good for him: to sing in choruses, serving in them as a leader in the attack, and if he has no voice, to act as accompanist, rehearse the singers, read the score, make transcriptions, and, in short, serve in every capacity as a real musician. I should like to sum up all this in a formula that is as

simple as it is true: *The pianist who is nothing but a good pianist is a bad pianist.*

If I have thought it necessary to give so much space to everything concerning the piano, it is not merely because this instrument is the one most usually found in our drawing-rooms. It is more particularly because of the preponderant part that it plays in the musical civilization of our time.

The celebrated Russian pianist and composer, A. Rubinstein, did not hesitate to assert his convictions upon this subject: "Instrumental music," he said, "is man's most intimate friend, closer than his parents, his sisters, or his comrades"—(?)—"This is particularly shown in misfortune; and of all instruments the one that best plays the part of a friend is the piano. Therefore, I consider the teaching of the piano as a great benefit to humanity and I am not very far from making it obligatory"—(this is perhaps somewhat excessive)—"regarding it, be it well understood, as an intimate consolation for the pupil and not as a means of *shining in society.*" *

Did Rubinstein know this thought of Chateaubriand's, which he seems to have tried to paraphrase: "Music puts grief to sleep in troubled hearts"?

The piano is everybody's instrument: as has been already established, a knowledge of it is useful, in diverse degrees and for different reasons, to every instrumentalist, without exception; it is indispensable to singers and teachers of singing; moreover, the

* Anton Rubinstein, *Notes et Aphorismes.*

piano for other reasons is of extreme usefulness for the composer, as we shall see later. Often, too, it is by means of the piano, which in some measure sets a score before your eyes and beneath your fingers, that you become a composer. Witness the great number of worthy composers who commenced to express themselves as simple pianists. (I think it superfluous to add here that every pianist who intends to devote himself to composition, *even if solely for his own instrument*, should submit, at least partially, to the special studies for a composer, and not give himself up blindly to his instinct and the routine fascination exercised by the keyboard.) It is the sole instrument upon which we can condense a score, the only one which in every case is sufficient unto itself, without the aid of any other. From the beginning to the end of the modern studies, and during the entire life of the artist, its indispensableness is perpetually making itself felt for everybody; and certainly of all instruments it is the one that plays the greatest part in the diffusion and the expansion of the art.

If it is correct to say that *solfeggio* has always been and will always be, under one form or another, the solid basis of all deep musical instruction, we may also say that the piano is its most convenient and practical pivot, the one around which everything revolves and upon which all branches of teaching are grafted. It is the instrument *par excellence* of every musician.

Everything therefore pointed to the propriety of giving it a very large place here; and this so much

the more because all that we have said on this subject, addressing pianists in particular, besides its direct utility for them, can also, with a few slight modifications, be made use of in the study of every other instrument.

## The Harmonium

If we know how to play the piano, the study of the *Harmonium* is almost child's play; if not, we must begin by learning the piano.

In reality, a very well-trained, supple, and, above all, precise technique is the first indispensable requirement, and it is not upon the harmonium that it can be acquired. Apart from the fact that it would be insupportable, it would be entirely insufficient, the keys of that instrument not offering the necessary resistance for this finger gymnastics.

Next, it remains for us to learn and understand the functions of this instrument, with its various registers, corresponding at once to various *timbres* and different octaves; then the management of the bellows (and sometimes the knee-piece, particularly in Mustel's harmonium of *double expression*, the most perfect instrument of this type), on which depend the modifications of sonority and shadings, which caused it to be called at first: *orgue-expressif*.

All this is a matter of a few lessons at most and a few weeks of attention, with very little daily or intermittent study, which, in this case, is of little importance. We often see pianists teaching themselves this instrument without any text-book and

without the help of any teacher, and thus learning to make very good use of it; but if we want to go so far as to get from it all the delicate effects of sonority of which it is capable and play it like a true virtuoso, a longer period of study is necessary, which varies according to the instinct and the delicacy of touch of each player.

The study of the harmonium may be a good approach to that of the Grand Organ.

## V. The Organ

We shall speak here only of the Grand Organ considered as an instrument.

This mode of expression may seem strange to those who are ignorant that its study may be considered from another point of view: I owe them an explanation. The use of the Great Organ in the Roman Catholic Church demands an organist of three complete and distinct kinds of knowledge: that of the *instrument* itself and its management; that of *improvisation;* and that of the *liturgy;* and very frequently it is this combination of attainments that is understood by the *study of the organ; studies of the Roman Catholic Organist* would be better.

The Roman liturgy has no place in this book; of improvisation, we shall have a few words to say later when speaking of composition; only the study of the practice of the instrument considered by itself can find a place in the present chapter.

This having been explained, let us begin by estab-

lishing the great difference between the study of the organ and that of all other instruments, for the reason that there do not exist two organs that are exactly alike. When we know how to play one piano, we know how to play all pianos; a violin may be good or bad, but it resembles all other violins; while what is called an organ varies infinitely according to circumstances, among which are: 1st, the sum of money spent in building it; 2d: the place that is to be given to it; 3d: the dimensions and the acoustic qualities of the building which it is called upon to fill with its waves of sound; 4th: the kind of service that is required of it (the simple accompaniment of singing or the execution of organ pieces); 5th: the skilfulness or simply the fancy of the manufacturer; 6th: ———, etc., ——— etc. From all of which it may result that the instrument represents the volume of a large upright piano, or attain the importance of a house of four stories. An organ may have a single stop and a single row of pipes, and it is already an organ; it may have two stops, ten stops, twenty, thirty, a hundred or two hundred stops; it may have one, two, three, four or five manuals; it may have pedals or not, and it is still an organ. Its stops may be distributed in a thousand different ways among its various manuals and be controlled or not by combination pedals or other mechanism; it may have been made for many centuries or according to the modern principles of modern construction, it may be of the most naïve simplicity or of an inextricable complication, and worked by electricity from a distance; and

it is neither more nor less than an organ. The master-maker of organs, or organ-maker, who is himself a great artist, and should possess a great knowledge, in acoustics as well as mechanics, never makes two instruments exactly alike. The most colossal organ in the world, to my knowledge, is that of the Town Hall in Sydney, Australia, made by the house of W. Hill & Son, of London, which contains 127 stops, 162 registers, 9,966 pipes, governed by five manuals, a pedal board and 28 combination pedals, and cost the trifling sum of $90,000 (450,000 francs). So the question here is not to learn to play any determined instrument, but to learn how to make use of any organ whatsoever, whether we are taken unawares, or have several days to become acquainted with it. This last condition naturally is so much the more strongly imposed the more important and complicated an organ is, and no organist, however learned and experienced he may be, would be capable of obtaining, without preliminary practice, exactly all the desired effects of sonority from the organ at Riga (Russia), which has 124 stops, or that of Notre Dame at Paris, which has 110, or that of St. Sulpice, which numbers 118. But, let us say also, such instruments are rare and splendid exceptions, and only artists of the first order can be called upon to put them into play. On the other hand, every organist should know how to familiarize himself quickly with an organ of ordinary dimensions, with 30 or 40 stops distributed among two or three manuals, such as are found pretty nearly everywhere.

To acquire this faculty, to become capable of making a convenient use of any instrument whatever (which we assume, be it understood, to be in good condition), two things are necessary: first, we must study in books the construction of the organ, ancient as well as modern, so as to understand the use and function of each of its parts; and frequent the shops of the manufacturers of the Grand Organ so that we may see them close at hand and attentively examine the instruments that are being constructed or repaired, taken to pieces bit by bit, as also try them and make their divers combinations work when they have been reconstructed. Organ builders are always very obliging and helpful to young organists who express a desire to inform themselves in matters of manufacture, knowing well that it is the most certain way for them to become skilful in the management of so complicated and so varied an instrument.

The second thing, when once the function of each piece of machinery is learned, is to frequent the society of organists, and obtain permission from them to listen close beside them, so as to watch them play and examine the way in which they make use of the resources of their instrument, to which they are accustomed and the qualities and defects of which they consequently know. As far as possible, we must not limit ourselves to the study of a single organist in this way, but extend this study to several, in order to make comparisons between them and their methods as well as between their various instruments.

It is not until we feel well equipped with all these

observations and are conscious that we know what a Grand Organ really is, that it is time to take lessons and place our hands upon the keyboard.

Those who proceed differently will find their progress retarded, because they do not fully comprehend what they are doing and what they are made to do.

This necessity of knowing and comprehending the construction of the instrument, upon which I insist, must not be regarded as isolated and peculiar to the organ. Every instrumentalist understands the function of his instrument without having to make a special study of it: the violinist has no need to have anyone explain that the rubbing of the bow produces the tones, and that the intonation is changed by shortening the vibrating portion of the strings by means of the fingers of his left hand, all this happens under his eyes; the flutist is not long in grasping the mechanism of his flute, the utility of the keys, and the stops that he manages with his fingers; but it is otherwise with the organist, who is called upon to make intelligent use of an extraordinarily complicated mechanism, all of which is hidden and shut up from him, with the exception of the controlling parts, the keys of the manuals and the stops of the registers. In order that he may know his instrument in all its complexity, as the others know theirs in their simplicity, he must make a little preliminary study which is not required from them,—that is the only difference.

Two conditions only are indispensable for undertaking the study of an organ: being *sufficiently* tall to be able to work the pedals easily, while seated easily

on the bench and without having to stand up even for the most distant pedals, and being able *to play the piano perfectly.*

But, some one will object, the organ is much older than the piano! then how did they learn to play the organ before the piano was invented? This objection is very just; however, it would not be formulated by one who had examined, as we have advised above, the organs of different periods, particularly those anterior to the invention of the piano, that is to say, those that have now been in existence for more than two centuries. In those days, the keys of the organ were almost as hard to manipulate, to manœuvre would be more correct, as the Carillons in Holland, where it is necessary to strike the keys with a blow of the fist. A great expenditure of force was required, and the most skilful *virtuosi* could never have dreamed of the rapidity and velocity which are to-day as easy on the organ as on the piano. The progress of its manufacture has advantageously modified the instrument from beginning to end. It is absolutely certain that the illustrious John Sebastian Bach, as well as his contemporaries, Buxtehude and Couperin, both celebrated organists of the Seventeenth Century, the one in Denmark and the other in France, had to execute his *fugues* and his *toccata*, perhaps sometimes with regret, in a movement infinitely slower than is possible to the ordinary organists of to-day, who, let us say in passing, sometimes abuse the suppleness of the modern instrument's emission of tone and pervert the spirit of the Old Masters of the organ by de-

priving it of a part of its nobility and grandeur. A fugue or any piece whatsoever of the time of Bach and Handel always gains by being executed sedately, broadly, and at a speed possible to the organs of their period, and this is the only way in which its character is preserved. But this is a parenthesis. Before the piano existed, there were the Clavecin, the Spinet and the Virginals, and it was upon these ancestors of the piano that the knowledge of the keyboard was acquired. All organists were then skilful clavecinists also.—It must also be remembered that at that time, when the practice of music was far from being so common as it is to-day, there were infinitely fewer musicians than there are at present, that the amateur was nothing but a simple listener more or less enlightened and initiated in its technique or æsthetics, but he never practiced the art himself, and that the organs as well as the organists and *Maîtres de Chapelle* might be counted. When a musician embraced this career, he consecrated his entire life to it; and from that time it mattered little if the novitiate was long and arduous. Now, things have greatly changed; the smallest chapel has its organ, so it must have its organist; and many amateurs are ready to assume this office temporarily without any idea of making a career of it, having simply in view the very real and elevated pleasure that every musician experiences at the mere contact of the organ manual. So this is the reply to the above objection: Fewer learned; they learned at the expenditure of more time and labour; they obtained smaller results.

The great and celebrated organists of the past centuries would probably be astounded if they could hear their immortal works executed to-day on one of our perfected instruments by our Guilmants, Widors or Saint-Saëns with a virtuosity, an ease, a variety of *timbre* and a suppleness of expression, which must have been their *desideratum*, but of which they never could have dreamed, owing to the condition of the organ manufacture in their time.

It is not only necessary that the apprentice of the organ should be able to play the piano very well, but he should devote himself especially on this instrument to the study of the legato style and pieces that have several parts under the hand, such as the *études* of Cramer, Clementi's *Gradus ad Parnassum*, the *Preludes and Fugues* of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* by John Sebastian Bach, and the *fugues* of Handel and Mendelssohn, which constitute an excellent apprenticeship for the practice of the organ. In devoting ourselves to this preparatory study, it is important to take scrupulous care in preserving for each note, and for each voice, its integral value, and in not lifting the finger too soon or too late, even for the fraction of a second, using for this purpose what is called substituted fingering, which alone is favourable to conscientious execution, while thoroughly realizing that those infinitesimal defects of precision, that are even imperceptible upon the piano, become monstrous on the organ, where they produce either gaps or discords that are equally painful and intolerable. We can see by this that to play perfectly on the piano is not

sufficient, but that it is necessary to play with a conscientiousness and a clearness which very few pianists, even the most skilful, take the trouble to do. And for this, it is not necessary for them to neglect the other special pianistic qualities, for everything that makes them adroit and agile upon the piano will also be found useful for the organ.

Another kind of agility of quite a special nature, for no other instrument demands it, will have to be acquired, namely, that of the feet and legs; for the working of the pedals is nothing else than a real keyboard whose keys are very much larger than any others; and embraces, moreover, in modern organs, a compass of about two octaves and a half. To facilitate this special study, many piano manufacturers make a kind of pedal with strings and hammers that can be placed underneath the piano, thus permitting one to work at home. This is an economy of time and a very great convenience; if one cannot be procured, it is very necessary to work on an organ.

We have only spoken as yet of preparatory studies; the others imperatively demanded the intervention of a teacher. The question is to apply to the *touch* of the organ what we have already learned on the piano, and bringing it to still greater perfection; to become initiated into the management of the registers and their multiple combinations, resulting in infinite varieties of *timbres* and sonorous effects of incalculable number; to acquire the particularly pure and elevated style that befits the King of Instruments, and finally to become worthy of the title of organist, which may

be considered as a title of nobility for every musician.

I fear I may insult the reader by adding here that if a knowledge of the laws of harmony is indispensable to the pianist, it is ten times more so to the organist, who would do well, moreover, to add a few notions of counterpoint if he wishes to penetrate deeply into the spirit of the most authoritative works of his repertory.

At every period of life, if a man has remained agile and adroit in the use of his hands and feet, if one is a good pianist and harmonist, and if to these acquired qualities is added the natural one of having rather large hands, there is nothing to prevent him from becoming a good organist. The amount of daily work need scarcely exceed three or four hours; more would be useless and fatiguing.

A certain maturity of mind is expedient for this great and beautiful study, which, nevertheless, may be commenced at the age of fifteen or sixteen years, if the required conditions are fulfilled.

It goes without saying that if the end sought is merely the accompanying of hymns upon a very simple organ, the studies can be greatly curtailed.

If, on the contrary, it is a question of playing the Grand Organ in a Catholic church, the studies of Fugue, Composition, Improvisation, Plain-Song and Liturgy must be added, as we have said above, and it then becomes a very complex science.

## VI. The Strings: Violin, Viola, Violoncello and Double-Bass

To understand thoroughly the difficulty attached to the study of *Stringed Instruments played with the Bow*, their action must be taken into account; for it is as complicated in reality as it is simple in appearance. In this each hand has an absolutely distinct employment, which is not the case in any other class of instruments.

The left hand supports the instrument; and, at the same time, by the pressure of its fingers upon the strings, the vibrations of which it shortens (or cuts off into sections for harmonic notes), it determines the absolute pitch of the tones; it is then upon the left hand alone that accuracy depends, and we can form an idea of the precision that it must acquire, when we realize that placing the finger a tenth of a millimetre (.03937 inch) out, and sometimes even less in the highest treble, will produce a note off the pitch. This is not in the least an exaggeration, and explains why artists who play with rigorously pure intonation are so rare; moreover, this pressure has to be made with a certain force, without which the tones lack cleanness; and as the stringed instruments are very often called upon to furnish passages of extreme rapidity, a very great agility is indispensable to it in addition. The qualities required of the left hand therefore are strength, precision, cleverness and agility.

The right hand holds the bow: upon it principally depends all that belongs to expression, the greater or less intensity of the tones, the most energetic as well as the most tender, or most passionate *nuances*, the most subtle inflections or accents, as delicate as and even more varied than those of the human voice, brilliancy and dash, heat, warmth and breadth; it also assists largely in the rapid action.

"The instruments of the bow, particularly the violin and the violoncello, are not limited, as are the wind instruments, to a small number of sound-characteristics; their *timbre* has an infinite variety of shadings," * according as the point, the middle or the nut of the bow is used, according as it is held level or inclined more or less to the side, according as the string is attacked near the bridge or the fingerboard, even over the fingerboard, according to the various kinds of bowing, whether *up* or *down*, the principal of which in French are called by the following names: *lié* or *coulé*, the *grand détaché*, the *détaché sec*, or *martelé*, the *sautillé*, the *jeté*, the *staccato*, etc. The use of the bow is a whole art by itself. We must therefore demand of the right hand incomparable suppleness, accompanied by extreme lightness and the greatest vigour.

The two hands, each on its own account and by different means, join in producing beauty and variety of tone, that constant preoccupation of every *virtuoso*. Their perfect agreement produces the balance of the whole and the perfection of the execution,

* Gevaert, *Nouveau traité d'instrumentation.*

the difficulty of which is so great that no one would dare to attempt it, as it seems almost unattainable when we analyze it closely, unless he had as an encouraging example a considerable number of instrumentalists who have been able to vanquish it by obstinate labour. This execution is also very soon aided by a peculiar instinct, thanks to which the pupil is no longer conscious of the prodigies of skill that he performs every moment.

Contrary to the keyboard instruments, the prodigiously complicated mechanism of which is the work of the manufacturer, stringed instruments possess absolutely none: a wooden box, four strings of sheep's entrails and a few strands of horsehair,—this is all that the artist holds in his hands to produce the most varied emotions. If the result obtained be compared with the simplicity of the means employed, it will be acknowledged that it is amazing and phenomenal; nothing is truer, however, and this total absence of mechanical transmission, which leaves man's hand in direct and intimate contact with the vibrating string, is exactly what produces that impression of vitality and penetrating warmth which is the chief characteristic of these instruments and constitutes their remarkable beauty. The man and the instrument grow to be but one individual, or more exactly, the instrument is nothing but an extra organ added to the natural organs, that we come so to identify it with ourselves, that we set it in action, like the other organs, under the simple influence of our will only, without further troubling about the means employed, and

without even dreaming of analyzing them. This becomes instinctive, as a new vital function would be; we *play* as naturally as we should sing, and it is by this sign, this complete oblivion of all preoccupations of a material order, that the artist can most surely recognize that he has at last become the master of his instrument. Up to this point, he is nothing but a simple apprentice.

Outside of his studies, that are far more engaging than arduous, the normal programme of which we are about to outline, it is also well for the pupil to accustom himself early, not only to tune his instrument, but to clean it and keep it in good condition, and himself to make certain little ordinary repairs that will keep it in perpetual order, such as replacing *secundum artem*, a broken string, setting up in its exact place the bridge that has been accidentally moved, and assuring the good working of the pegs, matters which do not call for the intervention of the violin-repairer, and which one learns to do much better for oneself and more in accordance with one's own ideas.

Later, he should teach himself to recognize and appreciate the artistic, if not the commercial, value of a good instrument, to distinguish the schools and great violin-makers otherwise than by the label, very often fallacious, lying at the bottom of the sound-box; to distinguish an old instrument from a clever imitation, in fact, to act as an expert, if only for his own profit, so that he shall not be duped on that day, when, as the reward for his labours, he wants to make himself a

present of a valuable instrument, a battle-horse, the supreme and legitimate *desideratum* of every great artist.

### The Violin

The Violin is, perhaps, the most difficult of all instruments to play very well. At first, the study is ungrateful and irritating to the nerves; but this does not last very long; and the learner soon gains a little power; it is when he attempts to go beyond this and attain real virtuosity that courageous and persistent efforts, entailing a fatigue that may sometimes become almost painful, are often necessary.

Therefore, it is well to begin young, and very soon, to get rid of those irritating difficulties of an elementary nature that are far more painful to face when one is of an age to suffer from their aridity. Taking the average opinion of a number of the most experienced professors, it would seem that the most favourable age to begin is from six to eight years. However, it is not well to hurry too much, for, on the one hand, a certain strength is needed, and on the other, it might be hurtful to the physical development; the pose of a violinist, which is not absolutely natural, particularly with regard to the left arm, demands a certain effort till he has become completely accustomed to it. Now, this position is of capital importance, and the good attitude of a violinist has an influence upon his playing, his tone and his agility, to a degree unknown to any other instrumentalist. We can venture to judge of the worth of a violinist before

he has played a single note, by merely seeing the manner in which he plants his feet and holds his violin; therefore the best professors are those, who, from the very beginning, pay most attention to giving their young pupils a perfectly correct position, which for a long time will be the object of their care. Some of them advise practising before a mirror, which is also done by singers who want to get rid of the habit of making grimaces; this is not a bad idea. Therefore, on account of this somewhat forced position, to begin too early, before the growth is sufficiently advanced, particularly with young girls, might entail a slight curvature of the vertebrate column, which it would be prudent to watch. This is the sole danger of premature study, for the fear that some people have that the vibration of the strings is communicated to the chest and causes trouble is pure illusion. At ten years of age, it is a little late to begin; at eighteen, it is too late if you want to acquire the talent of a *virtuoso;* but even then, with strong will, you can become an orchestra-player, a useful second violin, if you are already a good musician.

No condition of conformation is rigorously requisite provided that the arms and hands are in good condition; however, a large left hand with a long little finger will greatly facilitate matters.

The first quality to obtain from the violin is pure intonation; this necessitates a delicate and already trained ear. *Solfeggio*, therefore, should precede and accompany the study of the violin. But if the ear is not true, if it does not perceive with precision the

slightest differences of intonation, it would be better to give the violin up at once, for this can rarely be corrected, and if one is absolutely determined to study music, fall back upon some instrument with keys or a keyboard, one of those that produce an intonation ready made. If on the contrary, the lack of good intonation is occasioned simply by the awkwardness of the left hand, and if the pupil himself notices that he plays out of tune, above all if this is disagreeable to him, nothing is being lost, the study will be justified.

It is always an advantage for very young pupils to begin with a violin of small dimensions, a *half*, or *three-quarters*, according to their stature; this will cause less fatigue to the left hand. They can afterwards pass to a violin of ordinary dimensions without serious difficulty; and they accustom themselves very quickly to a greater stretching of the fingers, and recover accuracy very easily.

Another very important study is that of the quality of tone, which depends principally upon the bow, but also upon the pressure of the fingers of the left hand upon the strings; a rough or harsh tone, or a tone that is feeble or shrill is equally faulty. You must play the *bow on the string*, a very accurate expression, the importance of which can only be appreciated by one who has managed a stringed instrument. "Each string of the violin has an entirely distinct tone colour. The *chanterelle* (first string) has accents that are vibrant and warm, which lend to the melodic phrase all the intensity of expression of which it is susceptible. The very piercing notes of the *chante-*

*relle,* placed in a region to which the human organ cannot attain, give a luminous sensation and awaken the idea of the supernatural and the marvellous.

The second string is not so biting as the *chanterelle:* it excels in interpreting melodies that are ideal and suave.

The third string is distinguished by an incomparable sweetness.

The fourth string is a Contralto voice, with a masculine and powerful *timbre.*" *

This may guide us in our efforts towards a beautiful sonority, as applied to each individual string. It goes without saying that the quality of tone depends also, in great part, upon the perfection of the instrument, and that we cannot obtain the same richness of *timbre* from a violin that costs 20 francs as from a Stradivarius; but in the hands of an awkward pupil the two instruments will not present much difference, whilst the pupil and the professor, or even two pupils playing alternately one and the other of the two instruments, will produce tones that have not the slightest resemblance.

It is therefore absolutely useless, so far as the elementary studies are concerned, to place in the hands of a pupil an instrument of value of which he can make no use; and this so much the more on account of a most mysterious phenomenon, conceded without question, a violin deteriorates and loses part of its qualities when it is badly played. Inversely, it improves under skilful hands.

* Gevaert, *Nouveau traité d'instrumentation.*

Besides the qualities of good intonation, purity, and *timbre*, there is a third quality that is still more difficult and takes longer to acquire, and that is the flexibility of the bow, upon which depends the supreme elegance, the spirit, and the variety of subtle shading, as also the distinction so necessary to an instrument that has to serve the most varied and sometimes the commonest uses; for the violin of the fiddler, the *village violinist*, is the same as that of Paganini. How do they differ? By the manner of playing them, the *timbre* and the boldness of the strokes of the bow. This study of the bow is, so to speak, a perpetual study by every violinist who has already arrived at perfection. Long after he has vanquished difficulties of all kinds, and attained impeccable accuracy, purity and richness, he still studies and will always study the infinite varieties of bowing, with its innumerable combinations, inventing new ones, and trying to apply them, and will find in this study, which is to him what breathing and vocal inflections are to the singer, an inexhaustible source of artistic satisfaction.

On no account should the study of the violin occupy more than six hours a day. Four hours will suffice perfectly, even during the finishing studies of pupils who are really well endowed. During the first years, it would be wise not to work more than two hours a day, and even less during the first months.

Just as in the case of the piano, numerous inventors have employed their ingenuity in inventing apparatus of various kinds to facilitate the study of the

violin: there are some to indicate the place on the finger-board for the fingers of the left hand, and which thus pretend to teach how to play in tune; there are some that are made to force one to draw and push the bow across the strings exactly at right angles; there are some to force the right hand to hold itself in the most correct manner; there are some to force the instrument to be held in the proper position; there are many others, infinitely more than might be believed. I have never been able to get a violinist to point out a single one that he considered of the slightest advantage; from which I conclude that they are all useless and infantile, good only for simpletons.

## The Viola

Every violinist who would like to play the VIOLA can learn it very easily in a few months, without any need of a professor. He has the same experience as that of the child who has begun on a little instrument, and afterwards takes up a violin of the normal size; he has to accustom himself to a greater stretching of the fingers. For, as far as its handling is concerned, it is simply a very much larger violin; and the use of the bow, although demanding a little more strength, is practically the same.

The viola does not offer that marvellous variety of *timbres* which has made the violin the universal interpreter of sentiment. We must not ask of it "the brilliant and passionate note; placed within the confines of the male and female voice, the viola has an

undecided and mixed character. Its veiled sonority, of an elegiac melancholy, is suited to everything expressive of suffering, sadness, and depressed feeling."

However, we can obtain tonal shadings of captivating effect: "The *two highest strings* have a penetrating vibration approaching harshness. On the two *lower strings* the *timbre* of the viola assumes a sombre and austere colour sometimes verging on the sinister." *

Such are the various effects that we may seek in studying this beautiful instrument, being sure of finding use for it in the practice of chamber-music as well as in the modern orchestra, where it plays an important part.

To play the viola, it is well to have quite a solid physique, for the instrument is much more fatiguing than the violin. For the same reason, it is necessary to wait until the growth is developed, till about fifteen years of age, and up to that time to study the violin exclusively. Then, it is excellent to carry the two studies along side by side, playing the two instruments alternately; this will give rapidity and virtuosity, and the two instruments complement one another without the slightest harm to either: Paganini, Vieuxtemps, Sivori, Alard, etc., were admirable viola-players.

Four hours of daily study are amply sufficient.

* Gevaert, *Nouveau traité d'instrumentation.*

## The Violoncello

What we have said of the violin may in a great measure apply to the Violoncello. The conformation of the left hand, strong and large, with the fifth finger rather long, assumes here more considerable importance, because of the dimensions of the instrument. To have both arms normally formed, and the ear correct, or capable of becoming so, are indispensable. The age that appears most convenient for beginning varies between six and twelve years, but a beginning may be made later, as long as the lack of flexibility is not in opposition to the exigencies of the position, particularly with regard to the bow. It is an advantage for the child to practice on a little violoncello proportionate to his size, and not to use an instrument of ordinary dimensions until he attains his growth; finally, the time of daily study depends solely upon the individual endurance; and, consequently, cannot be regulated absolutely; so long as the work is intelligent and not mechanical, it is profitable.

The position and the general attitude of the body are of great importance with the violoncello, as with the violin. It acts at the same time upon the quality of tone and the rapidity of the playing; but it is less constrained, particularly since the custom of adding a peg to the instrument, which supports a part of its weight. On this account, there is a possibility of slightly prolonging the hours of study, the fatigue being, in reality, a little less considerable.

Besides this, the peg, which is not yet used by all artists, I do not know why, offers an advantage of a particular character for the women who want to study this instrument. Before its adoption, the violoncello had to be held by a slight pressure of the knees, and the feet were constrained to a rather ungraceful position, almost a contortion; moreover, the forced contact of the skirts to a certain extent spoiled the vibrations of the sound cavity. With the peg, these two inconveniences have disappeared; and the violoncello, held as represented in certain portraits of St. Cecilia, has become infinitely more accessible to women and young girls than formerly.

This is how the learned musician Gevaert, in the work from which we have quoted several times, defines the qualities that constitute the beauty of *timbre* of the strings of the violoncello, and to which consequently the attention of the student of the violoncello should be directed: "Of all the instruments that are qualified to interpret a melodic idea, not one possesses the accents of the human voice in the same degree as the violoncello: not one reaches the deepest fibres of the heart so surely. In variety of *timbres*, it yields nothing to the violin. It unites in itself the characters of the three male voices: the youthfulness of the tenor, the virility of the barytone and the austere ruggedness of the bass. Its vibrant *chanterelle* is called upon to translate the effusions of exalted sentiment: regrets, sorrows and the ecstasy of love. The *second* and *third strings* have an unctuous and insinuating sonority that expresses more restrained feelings; the

*fourth string* is fitted only for songs of a sombre and mysterious character." *

But apart from its *singing*, it finds a use as the bass of the String-Quartet, where its power and roundness give it a particular importance.

By reason of its compass and its several registers, the violoncello is the only instrument that demands the knowledge of three clefs: the treble, tenor and bass (G, C in alt. and F).

## The Double-Bass

To play the Double-bass, it is better to be big and strong, and to have robust hands and fingers that will stretch easily. However, there are double-bass players of medium height who prove that the choice of their large instrument was justified; but it is better not to be small, so as not to shock the audience by a comical disproportion; that would truly be embarrassing.

Before the age of sixteen, it is greatly to be feared that one has not yet the necessary strength for this instrument; after twenty or twenty-two years, flexibility would be lacking, and a great deal more of this is required than might appear. It is therefore between these two limits that it is right to take up the study of this instrument, as indispensable as ungrateful, for it never elicits applause, although it

* The various citations from the *Traité* by Gevaert, and relating to the varieties of *timbre* of the stringed instruments are interesting to compare; this comparison will reveal the different characters of the voices of the quartet.

contributes an incomparable power to the whole effect, as much by its energetic *timbre* as by its depth. Its motto might be: *Sic vos non vobis.*

Its study is almost entirely material, and it is perhaps the sole instrument that never has to furnish style or amiability. "The tones of its strings do not present many well defined differences. Like all instruments whose compass is beyond the limits of the human voice, the double-bass is powerless to recall its accents. It has to be satisfied with giving an extraordinary breadth to the song of the violoncello." * It is a part that is relatively kept in the background, and yet it is of extreme importance in the orchestral ensemble. Its qualities are strength, solidity and accuracy, and sometimes a certain relative speed, and that is all. Thus it can be learned rather quickly with three or four hours of conscientious work a day.

## VII. The Harp

Formerly very numerous, the family of *instruments of plucked strings* is to-day reduced exclusively to one individual, the Harp, which was formerly, even during the best period and even while it was still very imperfect, its most beautiful representative. It shares with the organ and piano the faculty of being sufficient in itself and requiring no accompaniment; it is an autonomous instrument, that is to say, it furnishes both the melody and harmony. As a singing instrument, however, it is certain that it leaves much

* Gevaert, *Nouveau traité d'instrumentation.*

to be desired, for it is incapable of sustaining a tone, but it atones for this defect, inherent to its nature, by the beauty and richness of its *timbre*, by the distinction of its sonority and its capacity for producing certain passages that are peculiar to it; moreover, it combines admirably with nearly every instrument, which makes it as valuable in the theatre and concert as in church, and multiplies its uses.

The age that seems the most suitable for beginning the study of the HARP is somewhere about eight years; a little sooner offers no great objections from the physiological point of view, if these three conditions exist:

1.—That the child be rather tall for his age and well constituted.

2.—That the study be directed by some one who is very competent and experienced.

3.—That a harp for study can be found that is small and light enough to be handled without muscular fatigue.

On the contrary, to begin too late, that is to say when the joints are no longer sufficiently supple, would prevent the pupil from ever attaining a complete mechanical development. However, an adult of twenty or twenty-five years, who has the musical temperament, particularly if he has already studied some other instrument, can still become a good harpist.

No special condition of conformation is particularly demanded for the study of the harp, unless it is a very delicate ear; the harpist must be constantly tuning and retuning his harp; this is a necessity;

nevertheless, rather long arms and tips of fingers that should be fleshy rather than lean and bony, are certainly desirable. The second phalanx of the thumb should also be examined; if it is too supple and curves backwards, it may cause some embarrassment. On the other hand, it is certain that any deformity whatsoever would be an absolute defect, first because of the inconvenience, and then because the harp, on account of its elegant form and the essentially graceful pose of the player, attracts and holds the eyes of the hearer more than any other instrument. We can see this at a concert as well as at the theatre; from the moment the harp is heard, every eye turns to it irresistibly. A painful or ridiculous impression would therefore result from any deformity in the player.

The normal time to devote every day to this study is several separate quarters of an hour at first; then two hours, four hours, and, in exceptional cases, six; more would be excessive.

"All the exercises should be practised very slowly; the pupil must watch particularly the articulation of the phalanx; he must exact great suppleness, and immediately stop the study when the muscles of the hand suffer from the slightest stiffness or numbness." *

No matter what the intelligence of the pupil may be, it would be an illusion to believe that he can dispense with a teacher, at least during the first months, and as long as the position of the body as well as the hands is not perfectly assured. He would in-

* Raphäel Martenot, *Méthode de Harpe.*

evitably fall into bad habits that would be particularly harmful to the beauty of his tone as well as to the development of his agility. Later on, if in addition to this study, he is already a good musician, he can try to do without a master and prosecute his studies alone, but only upon the condition, however, that he does not aim at acquiring transcendent virtuosity and limits his ambition to a mediocre talent.

Otherwise, direction is indispensable. And, in this case, it may be remarked that the frequency of the lessons, lessons at short intervals, are of more importance for the harp than for the majority of instruments, which is explained by these two facts, that one contracts defective habits in a few days and that the study of the harp, considered as a whole, is relatively brief,—only a few years.

The harp is one of the most inconvenient instruments for reading at sight; first, on account of its form, which does not allow the executant to get as near the desk as his eyesight demands and place himself in the most favourable position; and finally, and more especially, because upon this instrument, and upon it alone, the accidentals, flat, natural, or sharp, are obtained by moving the pedals, which are seven in number, and these have to be moved before the string is attacked. The harpist, therefore, more than any one else, is obliged to attach the greatest importance to this study, and also, more than any one else, never to undertake playing any piece without first having read it over from beginning to end, so that he may anticipate the modulations as well as the acci-

dentals of a chromatic nature, and avoid as far as possible any surprise.

From this reason also arises the necessity of knowing how to read in advance, as well as of possessing that special memory of the eyes (see page 99), which might be called instantaneous memory, and which permits us to embrace several bars with a single glance without thereby losing the precise memory of what we are playing.

For this reason, also, a knowledge of the laws of harmony, which often permits a reader to divine what he has no time to read, should be considered a valuable equipment.

By its very nature, by its facility in executing arpeggios, which owe their name to it, as well as by the short duration of its vibrations, which are much shorter than those of the piano, the harp is essentially an instrument for accompaniments; and for a long time it was exclusively employed as such, and correctly enough; for it is truly in this *rôle* that it is in its best place. Nevertheless, aided by the progress of virtuosity and the manufacturer, one can, by means of art and address, succeed in producing a certain illusion of song, particularly in the *soli* and in the absence of every instrument that really has a singing quality, in comparison with which it would suffer. The middle strings are the ones that lend themselves best to this effect, which demands a well trained touch, at once powerful and supple.

Before the invasion of the piano, and again under the First Empire, the harp, although infinitely less

perfected than it is to-day, was the favourite instrument of the female sex, who, after having abandoned it for a long time, have seemed for several years past to be returning to it. It is a fact that of all instruments, the harp is certainly the one that allows of the most graceful attitude and the most charming movements of the body and arms, the one that most harmoniously combines the pleasure of the ear with that of the eyes.

## VIII. The Wood-Wind: Flute, Oboe, English Horn, Clarinet and Bassoon

There is less reason for us to enlarge upon *Wood-Wind Instruments*, the study of which in fact is easier, except when we wish to attain exceptional virtuosity in them, in which case it offers as much difficulty as any others. By that I mean that given an equal amount of time, effort and aptitude, we more easily succeed in acquiring a fair degree of skill upon a wind-instrument than upon those that compose the String-Quartet. Wind-instruments are generally restricted in compass; they can produce varieties of intensity only under certain conditions; they never produce more than one note at a time; with a few exceptions, with them the emission of tone is slower and less active. For all these reasons, and others besides, among which is the scantiness of their repertory, it happens that the study of them is infinitely more limited. But these same reasons, which simplify and abridge the elementary study, render, as it is easy to understand, the fin-

ishing studies much more difficult and laborious, if we wish to rise above mediocrity and attain real excellence. When I say that these studies are not so difficult, it must be understood that only the inferior grades are meant; perfection in any of them is difficult to acquire.

A new factor here comes into play, one with which we have as yet had little to do, this is physical conformation. We have indeed said that it is an advantage for a violinist to have a large hand and for a harpist to have long arms, but practically everybody, except the one-armed, can play the violin or the harp; a small hand and short arms are not absolutely prohibitory, constituting simply an extra small difficulty to vanquish. This is no longer the case here, and the requirements relating to the individual's structure should be very seriously taken into consideration in the choice of an instrument; for, by despising such precaution, we should expose ourselves to disaster, since nothing, not even the most intelligently directed and most obstinate labour, can conquer the invincible obstacles created by a native imperfection of the respiratory organs, or a disposition of the lips other than that which suits the instrument chosen. This is why, as each instrument is considered, we will state precisely the indispensable physiological conditions to be fulfilled, even at the risk of exposing ourselves to occasional repetitions, which are preferable to omissions.

## The Flute

The natural qualifications that are especially favourable to the practice of the flute are: rather thin lips, regular teeth, sound lungs and supple and delicate fingers. The most necessary requirement for playing well is a good *embouchure*, "that is to say, a certain arrangement of the lips suitable for putting into the instrument all the breath that comes through the mouth," * without losing any of it, and that will not allow a kind of hiss that precedes the tone to be heard,—a very disagreeable thing which occurs in the playing of all faulty flutists. A slightly projecting upper lip is not a disadvantage, quite the contrary. The detached notes being made on this instrument by means of an articulation called *tonguing*, it is indispensable that the artist should possess great volubility in the organ of speech in order to execute rapid passages with cleanness, and above all, he must accustom himself to form a perfect agreement between the movements of his tongue and those of his fingers.

For a long time, flutes were made out of wood, then of ebony and granadilla wood; now they are made almost exclusively of silver, which does not prevent this instrument from remaining classed with the family of *Wood-wind*, to which it owes its origin. Moreover, it is demonstrated by the laws of acoustics,† and verified by the experience of skilful makers,‡ that

* Fétis, *Histoire de la musique.*

† See Helmholtz, *Sensations of Tone*, and Tyndall, *Sound.*

‡ Notably Sax in Paris, and Mahillon in Brussels.

the material of which the tube of wind instruments is formed has no influence, or next to none upon their *timbre*. Flutes have even been made of crystal and there is nothing to prevent their being made of gold.

Of whatever wood or metal the instrument held in the hand may be constructed, the sound that we must try to get out of it remains the same, and the numerous adjectives that writers and poets so frequently use regarding it may guide us in this task. The tone of the flute should be pure, sweet, velvety, suave, silvery, crystalline, limpid and ethereal, otherwise, its very nature is changed and it loses all its charm. Effects that are violent and dramatic are scarcely suited to it; a nasal, heavy or hollow quality of tone is a great defect. Apart from this question of *timbre*, the principal qualities to be acquired are rapidity in the execution of passages, delicacy in accentuation, lightness, suppleness, extreme agility and the art of skilfully managing the breath.

It does not appear advantageous to begin the flute before the age of ten or twelve years; before that age, it is somewhat difficult to manage the action of the lungs and some fatigue injurious to the health might even be caused.

The *maximum* of work should not exceed four hours a day, here, as always, wisely divided, and considerably reduced during the first months.

The PICCOLO demands no particular study. It is simply an ordinary flute reduced one half in all its proportions, and consequently it produces tones an octave higher; it requires the same fingering and the

same *embouchure*. However, in this case, very fat fingers would be an inconvenience. The qualities of sweetness and suavity that belong to the flute are not to be sought in the piccolo; the latter should be particularly biting, incisive and strident; any excess, a hard and shrill tone, is a fault however.

## The Oboe

The study of the Oboe is very difficult; the instrument is full of pitfalls for the pupil, and the latter must exercise great perseverance in order to acquire an execution that is clean, and to attain a certain ability. The most considerable difficulty that must first be conquered is the obligation of restraining the breath, so as to soften the tone and to avoid what are commonly called *couacs*, accidents that occur when the reed only vibrates, without any tone issuing from the instrument. But, in seeking to avoid all accidents of this nature, we must guard against playing with too much gentleness, for then we run the risk of having the instrument emit the tones an octave higher. Just as sweet and velvety, although a little nasal, as the tones of the oboe are when the instrument is in the hands of a clever virtuoso, so are they sharp and shrill when the performer is inexperienced or lacking in the taste that makes true artists. The oboist should aim at obtaining a tone that is delicate without being weak, penetrating without being hard, incisive and mordant without crudeness, by avoiding especially heaviness on the one hand and brutal noise

on the other, which are intolerable defects here. The instrument particularly lends itself to the expression of sentiments that are tender or rustic, to emotion and deep melancholy, which does not prevent its occasionally becoming infinitely witty and ironical. But only artists who are absolutely master of their quality of tone can dream of obtaining from their instrument effects that are so varied and so full of charm.

To gain this result, it is necessary, not only to be well constituted in everything concerning the chest, a common requirement for the playing of all wind-instruments, but also to have good teeth (at least the incisors), and thin, delicate and firm lips. The double reed of the oboe is formed of two thin layers of reed, of extreme delicacy, and it is in a great measure by the pressure that the lips exercise upon this fragile organ that are produced all the modifications or inflections of sonority of which the instrument is capable. The sensitiveness of the reed of the oboe is such that many oboists, anxious about the purity of their *timbre*, undertake the making of their own reeds, and take the most minute pains with it, which is the only means of adapting them exactly to their individual convenience, although reeds are found in all the shops of the makers of wind-instruments. A great number of bassoon-players do the same thing, although their reeds are less delicate. It is therefore easy to understand that in order to set in vibration an organ so fine, so delicate and so sensitive, thick and fleshy lips would constitute if not complete incapacity,

at least a great difficulty; and there are quite enough without this.

The daily work should be calculated according to the physique of each individual, and may vary between three and six hours; but because of the fatigue entailed, it would be *dangerous* to allow a normally developed child to devote himself to it before he had attained the age of eleven or twelve years. If I underscore the word *dangerous*, and if I insist upon it, it is because sad examples have demonstrated this fact in a fashion, alas! irremediable. At the age of fifteen, there is still plenty of time to begin, but at eighteen, it would be a little late. Generally speaking, then, let us set the most propitious age approximately at from twelve and fifteen.

## The English Horn

The English Horn, being merely an oboe of larger size, slightly bent for facilitating the execution, and producing tones a fifth lower, demands no special study from any one who can play the oboe fairly well; a little attention and a few weeks of study will suffice for him to acquire the use of this new instrument.

Admirable in expressing sentiments of grief and sadness, which it portrays with the most poignant intensity, it does not partake of the oboe's sportive and humorous side. It is an oboe in mourning.

## The Clarinet

The Clarinet may be begun without imprudence at a little earlier age, about ten, if the child is strongly constituted; sooner than this, the respiration is not sufficiently long. No serious inconvenience would be incurred by beginning later, so long as the suppleness of the fingers was preserved. The conditions of conformation consist only in having good teeth and lungs. To obtain good results, four hours of regular work a day are necessary.

The clarinet, one of the most beautiful voices in the whole orchestra, is the richest in varied *timbres* of all the wind instruments. It possesses no less than four registers perfectly defined: the *chalumeau*, which contains the deepest notes and recalls the old rustic instrument of that name; the *medium*, warm and expressive; the *sharp*, brilliant and energetic; and the *super-sharp*, biting and strident at need. Moreover, all these registers, thanks to the progress of manufacture, are able to melt into one another in the happiest manner possible, and furnish a perfectly homogeneous scale. Although possessing a predilection for certain forms of passages that specially belong to it, it accommodates itself to nearly all the vocal and instrumental *formulæ*, to which it lends its own peculiar richness of *timbre*.

I should not know how to say here, as I have said with regard to the flute and oboe, what sentiments the clarinet excels in expressing; it can translate

nearly all. Almost as agile as the flute, as tender as and more passionate than the oboe, the clarinet is infinitely more energetic and richer in colour, and for these reasons it offers to the pupil a more engaging and interesting field of study. But it can not be denied that it is a difficult instrument; independently of the mechanism, which requires great development, the music written for the clarinet generally contains many rapid passages, and then there is also the question of the *embouchure*, which can be by no means mastered at the first attempt, and upon this the beauty of tone depends, for the clarinet, like the oboe, is subject to the unlucky *couac*.

In addition to the ordinary clarinet, there are many varieties of the same instrument: *alto-clarinet*, *bass-clarinet*, *little clarinet*,* etc. . . . When we once master the handling and the *embouchure* of this type of instrument, it is very easy to become familiar with the use of any of the members, as the tablature is practically the same.

Even if one has already become a very good musician, it is almost impossible to learn the clarinet alone; without a master, certain fingerings and special manipulations, which are not indicated in any method, would always be unknown, and the execution of certain passages would be awkward.

* The little clarinet is only used in military music.

## The Bassoon

An instrument with a double-reed, forming the bass of the oboe as well as that of the entire group of Wood-wind, the Bassoon very seldom appears as a soloist. In revenge, it is of extreme use in the orchestra and in chamber-music written for wind-instruments.

The principle for the emission of tone on the bassoon being the same as that for the oboe, it is natural to conclude that the conditions of physical conformation should be the same for each; always healthy lungs, and teeth in good condition, etc. However, the utility of thin lips is less felt here, the reed being larger and of greater resistance.

It is quite soon enough to devote yourself to the bassoon between the ages of sixteen and twenty years, as the chest is not strong enough during the period of growth, and also on account of the weight of the instrument, because work of about five or six hours a day is required in order to accomplish good results; but understand that you must not wait until this age before acquiring any knowledge of music, and indeed it is very advantageous to have studied some other instrument previously. When all these requirements are fulfilled, it would seem that it is easier for a bassoon-player than any other to do without the help of a teacher; however, if real ability is required, it will always be infinitely surer to take a certain number of lessons *at the beginning* and *towards the end* of the studies.

Owing to its compass, the bassoon in its notation requires the use of two clefs, the bass and tenor.

I make only a note here of the *contrabassoon*, a very rare instrument, and difficult to handle, which, although figuring in quite a large number of scores, is nearly always replaced in actual use, whether at the theatre or concert, by another instrument that is more portable and of a more modern construction,—generally a *Sarrusophone*.*

## IX. The Brass: Horn, Trumpet, Cornet and Trombone

All the brass instruments, with the exception of the cornet, present themselves under two types: the simple type that emits merely a few tones, though of great beauty; and the chromatic type, which can sound all the notes contained in its compass, but with a less pure and less characteristic quality of tone.

| Simple Instruments: | Chromatic Instruments: |
|---|---|
| Horn (ordinary or harmony). | Valve Horn. |
| Trumpet, ordinary. | Trompette à pistons. |
| Trombone, sliding. | Trombone à pistons. |

One might think that the chromatic instruments, being perfect instruments, capable of playing every note of the scale, of modulating, and executing more rapid and varied passages than the others, in a word,

* From the name of its inventor, Sarrus.

being able to do everything that simple instruments do and many other things besides, one might think, we say, that it would be better to study these alone.

However logical this reasoning may seem, it is exactly true only for those who are merely seeking to acquire a very relative talent. Others who want to be able to fill the part of a capable artist under all circumstances ought to possess a knowledge of both kinds of instruments and be able, according to circumstances, to make use of either, which is never a matter of indifference. The chromatic instrument should never be employed except when it is rigorously indispensable, that is to say when the work to be interpreted has been written with its special qualities in view; in all other music, and particularly that written before the invention of the valve, the simple instruments are always far superior.

In fact, the addition of the mechanism of the valve, the real advantage of which it is not for us to discuss, has the lamentable effect of depriving every instrument of its individuality, and of giving the various instruments of the brass group too pronounced a family resemblance. It sometimes happens that the listener cannot tell if the tone comes from a horn or a trombone, and as it is the variety of *timbres* that makes the richness of the orchestration, the latter loses a great deal. Therefore we cross the composer's will and intentions if, as is too often done through laziness or an indifference unworthy of an intelligent interpreter, we substitute for the *timbre* that he requires another that is too nearly related to the neigh-

bouring *timbres*. This is a breach of fidelity and an error of taste that a conscientious conductor should never tolerate.

Another consideration arises from the same fact. Whenever we use chromatic instruments, whether rightly or wrongly, we must try, by dexterity of execution, to minimize their faults of construction, think of the type of the instrument and try to get as close as possible to its quality of tone. In this way we shall give them their charm and succeed in getting the most out of them.

Of all instruments, the brasses are those that suffer the least from a study undertaken at a late date. A robust frame is far more necessary for them than for any others, because of their considerable weight; and they are also the ones that demand the greatest efforts from the muscles of the chest, and a vigorous and sustained breath; and it would seem very inappropriate to place such cumbersome and fatiguing tools in the hands of children. However, everybody has not always thought thus: the celebrated maker Adolphe Sax, to whom we are indebted for the invention of the Saxophones, Saxhorns, Sax-tubas, Sax-trombas and other sonorous machines, held the contrary opinion; he contended that the constant practice of the biggest brass instruments constituted an excellent gymnastic exercise for the lungs. To support his theory, and to demonstrate the effect of this exercise upon the development of the chest, he recruited an orchestra of women who had superb ones, as any one could see. I know not if it was really to

this that they owed them; but it is certain that it did not appear to do them any harm.

We make only a note here of those instruments which find their employment solely in military bands, as well as the Bugle and the Clarion. Only one of them, the Saxophone, occasionally appears in the symphonic orchestra or theatre, to which it lends the charm of a mysterious, strange and penetrating *timbre*. A clarinettist can learn the mechanism of it very quickly, its *embouchure* being very nearly the same, and its reed simple, more flexible and less delicate. As for the Saxhorns and Tubas, they are very quickly learned by those who have already studied another brass instrument. We will not speak of them any more; but with regard to the study of the horn and that of the trumpet, we shall have to return in greater detail to the question already outlined, and to which too much importance cannot be attached,—the chromatic instruments and their judicious employment.

### The Horn

There are therefore two kinds of *Horns*, the *Cor d'harmonie*, or French horn, and the valve horn, of more recent invention, which is tending more and more to supplant the old one in the orchestra.

It does not fall within the limits of this work to examine how far this substitution is happy; it has its partisans and its detractors. We must restrict ourselves here to explaining what is necessary for the study of each of these two instruments.

Let us first remark that under the existing state of things, in order to be complete, a horn-player should know how to play both of them; for if, in the execution of modern works, the use of the valve-horn is indispensable, since they are written for it and cannot be played on the other, which settles the question, it is advantageous to return to the simple horn for the whole classic repertory, under pain of defeating the composer's intentions, by depriving him of part of his desired effects.

To be well understood, this demands a few explanations as to the way these two instruments work, explanations which I will try to give as briefly as possible, avoiding, as far as possible, all technical terms which would be understood only by a few. It is quite understood that I express no preference.

The French horn is derived from exactly the same principle as the hunting-horn, it is a simple tube coiled around itself, and is not qualified to give out *naturally*, under the effort of the human breath, modified by the pressure of the lips, more than a very restricted number of tones,* which are therefore called *natural tones*, and which resound with brilliance. To obtain intercalary tones, the horn-player introduces his right hand into the bell of the instrument, obstructing the orifice to a greater or lesser degree, with infinite precautions; by this artifice, he modifies, by obstructing them, the vibrations of the air contained in the tube, which results in some new tones

*These are the harmonics of any fundamental: C G C E G. B-flat C′ D E F G.
1 2

which have received the name of stopped notes, and which have not at all the same *timbre* as the first. In the same proportion as the natural tones are vigorous and brilliant, the others are veiled, uncertain, timid, and, so to speak, far away. From this lack of homogeneity, which seems *à priori* a capital defect, the old composers (I speak here particularly of those belonging to that beautiful period between Beethoven and Mendelssohn) and their interpreters managed to obtain tones of exquisite charm. The transition of an *open tone* to a *stopped tone* or *vice-versa*, far from being incongruous notwithstanding its difficulty and the awkwardness that results from it, perhaps even on that very account, is simply strange, with an essentially sympathetic strangeness that gives to a phrase sung by the horn an emotional character that is entirely individual. But the stopped notes can be produced only under certain conditions, preceded or followed by open tones, and also without too much precipitation; and for this reason they demand as much art on the part of the composer who calls for them as skilfulness and dexterity from the executant.

Let us pass on to the valve horn. Thanks to a very ingenious mechanical system, analogous to that of the cornet, which lengthens or shortens at will the circuit of air in the tube, it can produce with equal facility all the tones of the chromatic scale (which is the reason it is also called the chromatic horn), and all in the same *timbre*, which is *very nearly* that of the open tones of the ordinary horn. Hence, the composer finds it easy to employ, in the most rapid

modulations and use every note without having to take any precautions; hence also the performer gains a security which was unknown in the case of the old instrument, besides the faculty of being able to undertake rapid passages of all kinds. But on the other hand, the mysterious and veiled tones of the stopped horn are sacrificed. We might indeed produce stopped tones on the chromatic horn by the same artifice as in the simple horn, by inserting the hand into the bell, but as it is far easier to produce the same notes by means of the valves, this is scarcely ever done. Let us add that whenever it is done, the tones, owing to some reason connected with the construction of the instrument, do not possess the same poetical character and the same fascination as those produced on the simple horn.

Now that the two instruments are known with their qualities and defects, we can easily conceive that a clever horn-player should be able to play both alternately, according to circumstances.

Moreover, this double study does not entail any complication. A beginning must always be made with the simple horn, and a good *embouchure* on it acquired, as well as a frank and beautiful sonority, at once vigorous and unctuous, afterwards proceeding to the stopped tones.

Next we shall pass to the valve horn, which will seem relatively easy; and finally, we shall be able to play first on one and then on the other, and possess equal command of each.

Work may be begun on this beautiful instrument

at the age of fourteen or fifteen, if the chest is strong enough; but it may also be undertaken much later, it really does not matter much at what age, without very marked inconvenience.

The time of daily study should be divided into periods of half an hour at first, and an hour at most after having become sufficiently accustomed to it. Eight sittings of half an hour each make the best arrangement, always taking care to shorten or cut out a few when any symptoms of fatigue appear, as we have already established in a general way.

### The Trumpet

The Trumpet is like the horn; the same name includes two instruments: the *simple Trumpet* and the *Trumpette à pistons* or *chromatic trumpet.*

The principle of the simple trumpet is the same as that of the horn, but as no use is made of stopped notes, its scale is reduced to natural notes only, about a dozen, which is indeed very little. Nevertheless, on account of its brilliancy and power, it is a magnificent instrument, with a heroic and heraldic character.

To remedy the inconvenience of this small number of notes, makers have ingeniously devised various means. First they tried a spring slide, which, being lengthened at will, lowered the whole natural scale by one, two or three half-tones; then, later, an Englishman, whose name is not known to us, had an idea of adding keys to the trumpet, as to the clarinet or oboe, and his endeavours were crowned with success;

but he found that he had created a new instrument whose quality of tone bore little resemblance to the typical tone of the trumpet. "It was an acquisition, but not an improvement." * The inventor called his keyed trumpet by the name of the *horn-bugle*. Then the French maker Adolphe Sax adapted to it the system of valves, now generally adopted.

The *trumpette à pistons* has the advantage over the simple trumpet of being able to produce all the diatonic and chromatic notes in its compass, and is therefore infinitely more convenient for the composer, and also more agreeable for the performer, who with it is no longer condemned to perpetual flourishes, but is able to attack the most varied passages. Just as in the case of the horn, however, the addition of the valve mechanism modifies the *timbre*, which, no longer so brilliant nor pompous, becomes a little heavier.

Inversely to what we have said about the horn, teachers of the trumpet are generally of the opinion that it is better to begin with the study of the *trumpette à pistons*, between twelve and eighteen, or even sooner, provided that the amount of study be proportioned to the physical strength of the individual. To commence too late, after the age of about twenty-five, would be risky, for there are few instruments so ticklish as this one. Those, however, who have previously played the cornet can undertake the trumpet at any age whatsoever. Regarding the necessary time for study, it is difficult to tell precisely, because it depends entirely upon the temperament of

* Fétis, *Histoire de la musique.*

the pupil and the force of resistance in his lips; with this reservation, as much time as possible.

Although of the same family as the horn, the trumpet differs essentially from it in its effects. Its sonority is at once less sweet and soft, but more silvery, clear, strident and brilliant. These are the qualities that must be sought, with a clean, frank and precise attack; even a little ruggedness, if not allowed to become excessive, is not inappropriate. Moreover, pupils would do well to endeavour to produce with ease the *piano* and *pianissimo* shading, in which the modern composers have found ravishing effects.

## The Cornet à Pistons

At the age of twelve, one can put the Cornet à Pistons in the hands of a child, if, however, he has not a weak constitution; in the contrary case it would be better to wait, for up to the age of twenty at least, it will be quite time enough.

As we have already seen with regard to the trumpet, and generally speaking with all the brass instruments, the fear of fatigue should be the only guide for determining the amount of daily study.

The *embouchure* of the cornet is infinitely easier to acquire than that of the horn or the trumpet, and it is in a great measure to its facility of emission of tone that it owes its popularity.

Its *timbre*, which arises from its construction, is lacking in distinction. To the same degree that the trumpet is clear and elegant in its brilliancy and its

limpid clarity, and the horn is poetical and sentimental, so the cornet is essentially trivial and muddy. It is then to lessen its defects that the virtuoso-cornettist must always strive, and here, by a unique exception, it is permissible for him to endeavour to imitate neighbouring instruments and those of the same family that are endowed with a nobler *timbre:* thus, to have the tone of a horn, or the tone of a trumpet would not be a defect in a cornettist, but rather a valuable quality under many circumstances. It atones for its fault of vulgarity, first by being very easy to study, and then by a certain volubility, that is peculiar to it, a suppleness that can do everything,—trills, repeated notes, and runs of pretty nearly every kind, as well as an aptitude for singing well or imitating a song, of which it *must avail itself*.

The study of the *cornet à pistons* produces certain qualities for the practice of the trumpet; but the simultaneous study of the two is useless when working seriously at the trumpet,—it may even be harmful to the cornet. When once the period of study is passed, a trumpet-player can play the two instruments alternately, provided he makes only a moderate use of the cornet; an abuse of the latter would expose him to the loss of a part of his most precious qualities, particularly firmness in the attack of his tone.

## The Trombone

One of the most beautiful and powerful voices in the modern orchestra is the Trombone. Admirable in expressing strong and noble sentiments, it becomes simply ridiculous when it is meanly reduced to marking time, or reinforcing the bass in dance music, which proves the nobility of its character.

As in the case of the horn and trumpet, we are here confronted with two instruments which, although bearing the same name, are very different and possess individual qualities: the *slide trombone*, which is the real trombone, the instrument of pomp and majesty *par excellence*, and the *trombone à pistons* the sole advantage of which is that it is easier to learn and to handle, and lends itself better to the execution of rapid passages which do not befit its solemn character and by their very velocity deprive it of a great and the most beautiful part of its prestige and dignity.

Every conscientious trombone-player then, who is desirous of becoming an artist, should first make himself master of the considerable difficulties presented by the slide trombone. If afterwards he wishes to acquire the *trombone à pistons*, this will be for him a matter of six weeks, or two months at most.

One can hardly undertake the study of the trombone, the hardest of all the brass instruments, before having attained full growth; it is therefore difficult to state the age precisely. We may, however, call

fifteen the limit of youth, for there are several instances of pupils of that age who have gone through their studies in good condition; and twenty-five as the highest limit, beyond which it would seem difficult to accustom the lips to exercise with required force the pressure necessary to obtain a beautiful sonority, supple and firm at the same time. However, if one has already played any other brass instrument whatsoever, and if one has by this means acquired the facility of *embouchure*, one can begin to study the trombone at any age.

Because of the fatigue it brings, one should never, even though well accustomed to it, work more than a few minutes at a time, and never more than four hours a day; at the beginning, two hours are amply sufficient. Firm and tough lips and a solid and well-formed jaw are necessary.

Of the slide trombone as well as of the piston, there are instruments of three different sizes, called alto-trombone, tenor trombone and bass-trombone,* all three being equally employed in the orchestra, and almost always simultaneously.

The music for the trombones being written sometimes in the alto, sometimes in the bass and sometimes in the tenor clef, a knowledge of these three clefs is useful to the trombone-player.

It is the custom to exercise first upon the tenor trombone; and when that is learned, little difficulty is experienced in playing upon the others; it is only the matter of a few days.

* The double-bass trombone is rarer.

## X. The Guitar and Mandolin

It seems entirely superfluous for us to consider here certain odd instruments, strangers to the symphonic orchestra, which, although having a perfectly musical character, are connected with this art only on account of their picturesque quality and local colour, and have been used by composers only in exceptional cases or as *hors-d'œuvres*. Such are, among others, the *Guitar* and the *Mandolin*, instruments for serenades, charming to hear in an appropriate setting, in the streets of Seville, or the canals of Venice, but out of place elsewhere; also the Russian *Balalaïka* and the Hungarian *Cembalo*.

Let us say, however, that the guitar, if we want to do anything more with it than to accompany a common Italian or Spanish song, is excessively difficult to learn, but it also forms a very delightful study; in private, in the midst of a very restricted circle of attentive amateurs, a skilful artist can get charming effects from it, although of little variety and always somewhat similar; but it is very difficult to find a good teacher of the guitar, this unfashionable instrument falling daily into greater disuse, which is to be regretted.

In Italy and Spain, the guitar plays the part of accompanist to the voice, or to the mandolin; the latter constantly gives the melody, and guitars accompany it. Sometimes a flute or a violin is added. In its picturesque frame, under a beautiful moonlight, or a starry sky, such a little orchestra in miniature

lulls the tourist deliciously, and sometimes produces ravishing effects. The mandolin, on the contrary, may be learned with extreme facility; the irritating *tremolo* of its doubled strings, endurable only in the open air, is within the reach of everybody. For violinists, in particular, it is a mere toy; its strings and fingering being identical with their instrument, they have nothing to acquire but that perpetual trembling of the right hand which seems to have furnished the voice with that deplorable example of tremolo of which we shall soon speak.

## XI. Difficulties of Different Instruments Considered

From the sum of the foregoing information, it will be seen, although this has not been the precise question, that all instruments are not equally easy or difficult to learn, and that there are some that demand an infinitely longer period of study than others in order to arrive at relatively equivalent results.

This is an easy matter to understand, but more difficult to measure and state precisely and exactly. We cannot take as a term of comparison the moment when the artist attains perfection, for this moment is imperceptible; what one calls perfection is far from another's idea of it. No one can ever say: I *know* the violin, or I *know* the harp; any more than one could say I *know* History, or I *know* Astronomy. But one can say: *I know how to play* the violin, *I know how to use* the harp, *I have studied* History, *I*

*have some knowledge* of Astronomy, because these various ways of expressing oneself do not convey the idea of a complete and final knowledge, any pretension to which is simply absurd. The most accomplished *virtuoso* to-day will be seeking to-morrow for new effects and methods; so he will still further perfect himself, just as the most learned historian, by delving deeper into his documents and comparing them, will make further progress in his science. Absolute perfection does not exist, and what we call by that name is merely that which seems to us to approach it most nearly, still remaining perfectable. Therefore we cannot plant a fixed landmark upon this ever-fleeting spot. But there is another that can be perhaps stated definitely enough for the present inquiry; this is the moment when the pupil has acquired a complete knowledge of all the means of execution applicable to his instrument and knows how to use them with discernment.

Admitting this medium level as a term of comparison, we can first establish, proceeding by families, that those instruments demanding the longest study are: the stringed instruments and the piano; secondly, the wood-wind and the harp; and thirdly, the brass. (It will be remarked that neither the organ nor the harmonium comes into the question, these two instruments imperiously requiring a preliminary study of the piano upon which their own, one very short and the other very long, will be afterwards grafted, as we have already seen.)

If we now examine separately each of the three

categories grouped as above, individual aptitude being regarded as equal, the pupil who studies the violin or the piano will be the longest in attaining our medium level agreed upon; the violoncellist will arrive before him and he will be preceded by several bow-shots by the double-bass player, whose instrument, notwithstanding its dimensions, or rather on that account, exacts infinitely less delicacy and precision.—Passing to the second group, and still supposing the pupils to be equally well endowed and trained, it is the flutist who should arrive first, then the clarinettist and the bassoonist, and finally the oboist; because the oboe is the most delicate instrument of this family to manage. I have forgotten the harp, which perhaps might dispute the first place with the flute, for, when once the first difficulties are vanquished, progress is often very rapid.—Finally, among the brass instruments, the horn is incontestably the one that claims the longest study, particularly on account of its stopped tones; the trombone and the trumpet are learned in about the same length of time; and, finally, the cornet may be considered the easiest of all.

(I have not spoken here of the viola, nor of the English horn, which are equally easy to learn, if one knows how to play the violin, or the oboe.) With regard to the special instruments for military bands, it will suffice to know that in a regiment, when a man shows himself incapable of sweeping the court or grooming his horse, he is put in the band, and within a few months, he is able to sustain his part, Heaven only knows how.

Another classification of instruments is still to be considered from the standpoint of study. It is absolutely necessary to make a difference between those who imperatively demand virtuosity, mastery, and those who can do without it. To play the violin fairly well is sufficient to hold a place as second violin in an orchestra; this is true also of the viola, the double-bass, the trumpet, the trombone, and even the bassoon, because they are very rarely required to act as soloists; with second-rate talent, they can make themselves useful at need. On the other hand, great skill is requisite for the first violins, violoncellos, flutes, oboes, clarinets and horns, whose parts are always far more in evidence. In the execution of chamber-music, an equal degree of perfection is required of all the participants, whatever their instrument; no mediocrity is tolerable there. It is the same, with greater reason, when one intends to attract the attention of the audience to oneself alone, by the interpretation of a Concerto or even another instrumental solo that is less developed. It would be simply ridiculous for any one to attempt such things without the possession of a veritable and complete talent, without being so sure of himself as to feel certain that he will not create that agonizing feeling of fear and anxiety which deprives the public of all the pleasure it has a right to expect from the execution of a charming work. The true *virtuoso* should inspire confidence from his very first notes, appear at his ease amid the greatest difficulties, and give everybody the impression that it is all child's play to him.

A few years ago, one of our most marvellous young pianists, travelling incognito and finding himself in a large hotel in Switzerland, availed himself of a few moments one morning when the *salon* was empty to limber up his fingers and play some of the most beautiful pieces in his repertory upon a magnificent Steinway piano that he found there. As he was about to leave, a stranger whom he had not noticed, approached and asked his permission to let him express his admiration. "I have been here from the beginning," he said, "and you have charmed me so greatly that if you had continued, I certainly should have remained all day long; I have heard Liszt, Chopin, Thalberg, and no one has ever produced such an effect upon me. Will you permit me to ask you a question?"

"With pleasure, Sir, if I can answer it."

"Oh, yes, certainly. I should like to ask you *if you have learned to play or if it is natural?*"

A burst of laughter from the young pianist, who did not see until later that this simple person had paid him the most beautiful as well as the most ingenuous of compliments. In reality, when we hear a great *virtuoso*, the first impression is that it costs him no effort, it seems as if we could do the same thing; and reason has to intervene before we realize that this is the result of many years of arduous labour.

However, not to speak solely of exceptional talent, it is certain that at a small party and at intimate gatherings, a modest and unpretentious amateur can be infinitely agreeable and make himself useful if he atones for his imperfections by qualities of artistic

intelligence, if he is a good reader and a good musician. This is why we again insist, and for the last time, upon the necessity for every instrumentalist, whether an amateur or a professional artist, to precede or accompany his instrumental studies with solid studies of *solfeggio* pursued long and patiently, as well as a summary study of the piano; and if the piano is his instrument, a serious study of harmony and reading at sight. Before being a *virtuoso*, one must be a musician.

# PART III

## THE STUDY OF SINGING

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### I. The Child's Voice, Change of Voice, Early Instruction, Examination of the Natural Voice and Choice of a Teacher

If it is wrong to hold with the proverb that a hare is necessary in order to make a civet, since an excellent one can be made with a cat, it is nevertheless absolutely true for the singer, since for him nothing can take the place of the voice; and, in order to make a singer, a voice is necessary.

The voice, depending entirely upon the conformation of the vocal apparatus in its entirety and in its details, comprising the lungs, the trachea, the larynx, the glottis, the mouth and the nostrils, it is not in anyone's power to create a voice for himself or for anybody else if Nature has not provided one. This is what led Schumann to say: "If you possess a good voice, do not hesitate a moment to cultivate it, regarding it as the most beautiful gift that has been granted you by Heaven." But if it is forbidden to us to create voices, if even it is an impossibility to aid in their formation, what does depend on ourselves is not to

hinder their development by placing obstacles in their way; and this is what we too often do by lack of care and wise foresight. With a little more care and observation, it is certain that we can aid the work of Nature by simply refraining from shackling it, and thereby obtain a greater number of beautiful voices, which would indeed be a happy result, and at the same time prepare a generation of singers who are good musicians,—another matter that is equally to be desired.

During the period of childhood, boys and girls have almost the same voice, which is the child's voice. People are wrong in often saying that they have women's voices, for they differ entirely from the latter, even the voices of little girls, both in their compass, which with rare exceptions is infinitely smaller, and in their *timbre*, which has not the warmth, tenderness, nor energy. They differ, moreover, in the limits of their registers. The child's is a provisional voice, just as milk teeth are provisional teeth; there is nothing of either remaining in the adult.

Nevertheless, the child's voice frequently acquires an intensity and volume that are quite sufficient to render it possible to exercise it, and even to make good musical use of it, either individually as a soloist, or in *white voice* choruses, to which the juvenile *timbre* lends an altogether characteristic charm.

Because a child has *a voice*, we must not at all infer that it will have one later on, but neither does that mean that it will not have one. It may also be entirely without voice during childhood, and possess a

superb one after completed growth. This is the unknown.

At the moment of the transformation which makes an adolescent of the boy and a maiden of the little girl, a physiological phenomenon takes place that has received the name of *mue*, during which the child's voice completely disappears to make way for the definitive voice. This phenomenon, which is strongly accented in boys, is scarcely noticeable in girls, and for this reason: with the former, a general and prolonged hoarseness occurs with frequent throat troubles, the *speaking* voice assumes a hoarse and characteristic *timbre*, leaving no doubt as to what is happening, and meanwhile the larynx develops to its full dimensions, to almost double its former size, making the Adam's apple protrude, and lowering the compass of the voice by a full octave, and sometimes more. All this cannot pass unnoticed. In the female, whose voice suffers no change with regard to its diapason, the dilatation of the larynx is inappreciable, the modification works chiefly on the *timbre*, which is imperceptibly modified from day to day, little by little losing its infantile character and acquiring feminine qualities, but without anything being manifested externally in the voice that would attract attention. Just because it is less apparent, we must not conclude that it does not exist, for it has the same importance in both sexes.

The change generally commences, in our temperate climates, between the fourteenth year in the boy, and about the thirteenth year in the girl. Naturally, it is earlier in warmer climates, where development is

more rapid. It ends about the twentieth year in the man, and the eighteenth in the female. The dates are variable.

Some people have pretended that a sort of inversion is produced in boys, the result being that a soprano voice becomes a bass, and that even a young contralto announces a tenor: this may happen, but there is nothing absolute in it. Others affirm that the heredity of the vocal faculty is more frequently transmitted from the father to the daughter and from the mother to the son, by a kind of inter-crossing of sex. This is still another illusion that experience contradicts. The change offers all kinds of surprises; the real truth being that nobody can tell how it will result. Now it is only when this evolution is absolutely complete that the individual, whether man or woman, finds himself in possession of his true voice; and it is only then, in the immense majority of cases, that he thinks of cultivating it and learning to sing.

To learn to sing more or less correctly, to manage to utter sounds, he can always succeed in to a certain extent. To be really a musician and to sing like a great and intelligent artist is infinitely more rare. And this can very easily be understood, for he has passed the age when the malleable mind learns music like a simple language; he no longer possesses the suppleness of a child, and all that formerly would have been nothing but play for him becomes a study full of aridity.

For this condition of things, there should be a remedy, a remedy so much the more simple and judicious

in that it would only be a return to an old practice that had always and everywhere given excellent results, and the abandonment of which, for some unknown reason, is certainly most regrettable.

We can conceive how ridiculous parents would be who, before the definitive voice manifested itself, should pretend peremptorily to decide that they would make a singer of their son, or a lyric artist of their daughter. But, on the other hand, what can be very readily understood is that they should have this desire, either because such has been their own career, that it has pleased them, that they have succeeded in it and that they might be patrons of it, or from an inverse sentiment, the result of the regret that they have experienced at not being able to be singers themselves for some reason or other.

If such a thought rises in their minds, the following is certainly the best course that we can advise: As soon as possible, about nine years of age, for example, simultaneously commence the study of *solfeggio* and the piano, as already shown in the second chapter. *At the same time*, cause to be given to the child, by a very prudent and very intelligent teacher, real singing lessons, exceedingly short, not longer than a quarter of an hour a day, but dealing with the good emission of tone, correctness, suppleness, respiration and vocalization, without ever exceeding the range of his little voice, and particularly without trying to make him reach either high or low notes. (It is by this method, a veritable gymnastics of the lungs, which can never injure the health, but, on the

contrary, will improve the general condition, by strengthening the respiratory apparatus, that many singers of the beautiful Italian school who sought to form their voices were brought up.) If the youthful pupil takes pleasure in this study, and if his voice is not too thin, do not fear to let him participate in choral exercises suitable for children's voices, and to make him sing in church and in the *maîtrises;* but never force him if it causes him any fatigue. Continue in this manner until the change makes its appearance.

Here we must make a distinction.

If we are dealing with a boy, to watch for the advance signs of the change, such as hoarseness, etc., and immediately, without a day's delay, to suppress deliberately all vocal exercise, song and *solfeggio,* and this radically, without a single infraction; and to forbid him to join in even noisy games in which there is too loud shouting; to treat him in fact as one would do if he had some throat disease; during the whole time that the change lasts, which is several years, to insist upon work at the piano, theory, dictation, without forgetting studies outside of music, that are as useful to a singer as his special studies,—all this must never be lost sight of.

If we are dealing with a girl, we must not wait till the change asserts itself, because we know that it will not make itself felt; but consider it as begun at the age of thirteen, in which we shall seldom be mistaken. We must thenceforth interrupt singing lessons, properly so called, because they always occasion a little

fatigue to the larynx, but we may with impunity continue a moderate exercise of *solfeggio*, in low tones, and limited to those notes that are produced without any effort. Apart from this, proceed as with boys, avoid all tempestuous vocal outbursts, take care of the larynx and be more than usually careful to avoid everything that might cause a cold or quinsy; moreover, do not neglect the study of the piano; this cannot be too often repeated.

Everything is in this: to have acquired the art of singing before this physiological epoch, and to leave the organ quiet whilst the evolution is operating, without however abandoning the study of music, by frequenting concerts and theatres if possible, by hearing and appreciating the great singers, in one word, by giving free play during this period of waiting to all that is likely to purify the taste and elevate the judgment.

When it is thought that the change is completed, the scholar's new voice should be tried in the presence of his old master, who will be the best judge to decide the opportune moment for resuming the studies, greatly simplified thenceforward; for, if it has pleased Nature to gratify the pupil with a fine voice, in a few months he will be able to make use of it as if he had worked for five or six years, with the additional and inestimable advantage of not having tired it with this careful work that has been done on his provisional child-voice;—his milk-voice, I was going to say. Exactly the same thing will happen to him that we have already seen happen to the little violinists who, after

having practised on a small instrument, take a real violin in their hands; in a few weeks, or months, *having already learned how to sing*, he will have made intimate acquaintance with his new organ, he will have recognized its qualities and defects (for there is no absolutely perfect, natural voice), and perhaps, who knows? he will be his own best master for the future. In any case, he will never allow himself to be badly guided.

In support of this thesis, which some people will find too beautiful, I can quote a very great authority, that of the illustrious singer Faure, who thus expresses himself in his celebrated book: "The art of singing is passing through a period unfavourable to its prosperity. . . . We will mention first among the multiple causes of the decline of the art of singing, the abandonment into which the study of religious music has fallen since the almost complete disappearance of the *maîtrises*. These schools were at the same time, although indirectly, excellent and fertile nurseries for our operatic stages; it is well known what musicians and organists, what singers and illustrious composers this school has produced. There was no reason to fear that the choice of the pupils would turn rather to the church than to the theatre; the latter possesses, in fact, pecuniary resources against which it will always be hard for the church to struggle. This is a great argument that naturally weighs very heavily in the balance with young people in their choice of a career.

I shall meet with the objection that one cannot

destine a child for the lyric career without exposing oneself to cruel misreckonings; it may even be added that the stay in a *maîtrise* will not be of the slightest use to it if the transformation of its child voice into a man's voice is not accomplished as happily as one could hope for. There will none the less remain in him the material for an excellent musician who is able to direct his efforts in another line and create a place for himself among the teachers and instrumentalists who people our orchestras, and even among the composers." *

This is exactly the point I wanted to reach. When the crisis of the change is once definitely passed and leaves a voice that is not worth cultivation, the fact must be regarded as regrettable, that is certain, but nevertheless it must not be considered that the time spent on the infantine studies has been lost; far from that, only they must be employed in attaining another goal. If they have been directed in the way above indicated, or in some other way proceeding from the same ideas, the pupil will be found to have acquired by the study of *solfeggio* great ability as a reader, and further, a certain skill at the piano; and, still more, an intimate knowledge of what vocal mechanism is, a matter as precious to every instrumentalist as to the composer. He will then be in a good position to continue his musical studies by modifying their direction whilst having nevertheless assured to them a solid base and one that is the best of all.

* J. Faure, *La Voix et le chant.*

The *maîtrises*,* of which Faure speaks, no longer exist, or have become extremely rare; it does not fall within the scope of this work to discuss the desirability of their re-establishment, but there is nothing to prevent the application of their programme (*solfeggio*, the elements of harmony, singing, choral singing, piano and organ) to every child of whom we wish to make a musician, and if possible, a singer of real talent.

This is how the Larousse Dictionnaire, which cannot be suspected of tenderness for anything touching religious instruction, expresses itself: " The *maîtrises* were formerly schools of music attached to the cathedrals, and in them youths and children, kept and educated at the expense of the Chapter, received a complete musical instruction and furnished the chapel music, sometimes as singers and sometimes as instrumentalists. Before the establishment of the Paris *Conservatoire*, the creation of which, as well as that of the *École des mines* and the *École Polytechnique*, was the work of that immortal Convention which knew how to think of everything, the only music-schools existing in France were the *maîtrises*, and we may say that it is to them that we owe the real progress of our country, so far as music is concerned, before the Revolution. Their instruction was not at all perfect, certainly, it was even very incomplete, since, from the practical point of view, it devoted itself exclusively

* There are six in France, supported by the State, at Langres, Montpelier, Moulins, Nevers, Rheims, and Rodez; in Germany, at Dresden and Leipzig.

to the study of religious music; but it is none the less true that the *maîtrises* furnished even our theatres with a great number of artists of real talent, and that such and such a singer of renown owed his education to such and such an establishment of this nature. . . . It is certain that from a general point of view these institutions, scattered and multiplied over the whole surface of the country, rendered considerable services, not only by reason of the teaching they propagated, but also on account of the musical taste that they developed on every side."

On the same subject, moreover, here is the opinion of one of the masters of French art: "It was the nursery whence all the musicians, instrumentalists, singers, or composers were drawn. The Church worked then for the Theatre, and the male *personnel* of the opera was recruited only in the *maîtrises*. As for the female singers, they formed themselves. In the imitative arts, women have the livelier perception and the finer sentiment; they learn better and more quickly." *

It might be added that it is also certain that these schools, created especially for liturgical chant and for the needs of worship, did not form voices as flexible as those of the Italian school of the same epoch, which tried above all to produce theatrical singers. Therefore their enemies could not find words bitter enough "to blast this teaching of singing that stopped short at the change of voice," not taking into account that

* Adolphe Adam.—*Souvenirs d'un musicien.*—(Notice sur J. J. Rousseau.)

among those who, after this wise period of halt " had preserved their voices, there were found a good number " who then returned as soloists or choristers, or " were employed in the theatres."

On the other hand, it was admirably conceived, its results were excellent, and we may take this ancient institution, so unhappily dismantled, as an almost perfect model.

The change being completed, whether one has learned to sing beforehand or not, the first great question that presents itself, the fundamental question, is to know whether we are in presence of a voice that can be put to use. Here, nothing can replace the enlightened opinion of a professor, and indeed one of the greatest experience. It is not sufficient for him to know how to sing very well and to be the possessor of great talent. Above all, it is necessary for him to have had a long practice in teaching, and to have already had many young pupils pass through his hands, for nothing is more delicate or more subject to error than the diagnosis that is required of him. Therefore, in this case, we should seek a veritable authority in singing, and accept only with the greatest reserve the appreciations of teachers of the second or third order, who always find you with a voice, if only for the sake of getting an extra pupil and enlarging their field of experience. Furthermore, we must not be astonished if the very serious teacher whom we have selected as an expert does not immediately give his opinion, but asks permission to repeat the test on days separated by various intervals of time, prescribing ex-

ercises *ad hoc* to be performed in the meantime; or, on the contrary, according to circumstances, the observance of complete repose, in order to be able to judge, the better at each examination, of the development of the voice and its progressive expansion, from which he may succeed in deducing what may be hoped of it in the future.

It is necessary to know how to submit to all these exigencies, for which there may be good reason.

For, we must not deceive ourselves, a natural voice, that is to say after the change, is almost always very different from what it will become when once cultivated, and great sagacity, in combination with much delicate observation, is requisite to foresee with any degree of certainty in what way it will be modified later, whether naturally or under the influence of study.

There are many instances of tenors, even after many years, who have become barytones or basses; and surprises of the same nature also present themselves in women's voices.

But here we are anticipating; let us return to the examination of an uncultivated voice. The principal qualities to be desired in it are a good *timbre* and a certain degree of natural flexibility. Strength and volume increase with age and study. By processes known to every teacher, we easily manage to extend the compass and gain several notes, especially high ones; but a bad *timbre* is hard to modify, and flexibility cannot be developed unless the organ already possesses some natural elasticity. It is therefore to these points that we shall see the master of the art of

singing, to whom we have submitted the case, pay particular attention, only taking secondary notice of such and such a beautiful low or high note, that, on the contrary, the pupil will be inclined to exhibit to him as a jewel. But he will also examine other things,—the general structure, the capacity of the lungs, and the physiognomy and conformation of the mouth, which are of great importance in the emission of the voice, for it is in the mouth-cavity that the *timbre* is produced.

It should also be taken into consideration that a great and powerful voice is not indispensable even for the theatre, contrary to a somewhat generally prevailing impression, for there we see every day voices medium in intensity but fine in *timbre* and distinction, outdo others of greater volume that are lacking in the seductiveness exercised by good emission. It does not follow that volume and force are to be despised, but they are not the principal things, and it is particularly by the good pronunciation that the voice manages to dominate the orchestra and penetrate into the remote corners of a vast hall. Let us add that an amateur who knows how to manage his voice can be charming and exquisite in the drawing-room with a very restricted volume, and that there again what is most desirable is purity, in combination with flexibility and clearness of articulation.

Finally, when it can be asserted that all the conditions requisite for forming a singer or cantatrice exist, it is important not to choose a teacher lightly, but to place oneself in safe hands.

For that again, we may have recourse to the enlightened advice of the same eminent master, for even if he is not disposed personally to guide the first labours of beginners, which is quite probable, it is also probable that among his own pupils, or in his personal following, there is some young artist who has been brought up in a good school whom he will be able to recommend as worthy of confidence, while still retaining general direction and supervising the studies by means of hearings at considerable intervals; and this periodical control will be at the same time the best of stimulants both for the pupil and the teacher.

If for any reason, one does not succeed in obtaining this exalted direction, there is so much the more reason to surround oneself with a thousand precautions and enlightened advice so as knowingly to apply only to a teacher of great care and prudence; for, in any kind of study, whether music or other, nothing approaches in importance the choice of an elementary teacher. It is easy to understand this when we remember that his mission consists not so much at the outset in teaching how to sing, as to fashion, to bend and sometimes even to transform the instrument that Nature has given in the crude state, and all this by means of a few simple exercises, always very simple, that never cause any fatigue.

If the slightest fatigue manifests itself, it is because the teacher is incompetent, or that he does not suit you, which may happen, and amounts to the same thing. If, at the end of two or three months, your voice has not been modified to some extent, in

the direction of improvement, it is again because you have an ill-chosen teacher; for the first steps of progress should be somewhat rapid. In either case, it is better to make a change, and as soon as possible; for the pernicious influence of a teacher who ill conducts this first part of the studies may result in the total loss of the voice, which is irremediable.

What still further increases the difficulty in this grave question of the choice of an elementary teacher, is that, nowadays, I know not why, everybody calls himself a professor of singing; and the directories swarm with them. In the first place, all the accompanists who belong to a singing-class, in good faith by that sole fact believe themselves to possess the desired capacities. There is no doubt that they might attain them, but at least they are lacking in personal experience. I know violinists and pianists who have never had the slightest voice, and have never attempted to sing, who boldly dub themselves professors of singing; while others consider that it is sufficient to have an Italian name, or to Italianize their own. We can see from this with what sage circumspection it is advisable to proceed before confiding so delicate and fragile an organ as a freshly formed larynx to a professor who by inappropriate exercises can ruin it for ever. It has sometimes been said that a female teacher is better suited for women and a male for men. This does not seem to me in any way justified, and many examples have shown me that it is a matter of absolute indifference, at least for the present; later on, we shall see. What is of essential

importance for the moment, whatever the sex of the pupil may be, is to deal with a master who has already given proofs of ability by forming good singers, and one who himself has sung with talent. Whether he has preserved or lost his own voice matters little, for he will very seldom have to set an example, and enough voice will always be left to him to make himself understood. If he has preserved it, however, that can only be an extra inducement, as it shows at least that he has known how to manage himself well.

The first care of the teacher, in the first lessons, should be to *classify* the voice, that is to say, to determine, at least provisionally, in view of what kind of voice it is advisable to exercise it. This is already a very difficult matter, since it is rarely that in the native state a voice presents itself with entire frankness; and opinions regarding it may very often differ: where one professor will see a barytone, another will find the material for a tenor. Two things alone can guide us: range and *timbre*. The range being essentially modifiable by study, certain professors base their opinions solely on the *timbre;* it is necessary, nevertheless, that these two factors shall not be in too flagrant contradiction, whence arise hesitations and tergiversations that are sometimes quite justified and even inevitable, when we find ourselves in the presence of an organ that becomes modified of itself, as often happens, as we have already said.

A large number of modern methods begin by teaching the pupil the anatomy of the larynx. This gives them a very learned air, and leads one to believe that

the authors have taken the trouble to dissect the wind-pipe; but it seems to me to be an absolutely useless piece of knowledge for the pupil. He will sing neither better nor worse just because he knows that the voice is due to the sonorous vibration of the vocal cords, constituted by the thyro-arytenoidian muscles. When he shall have been taught that in the chest-voice the fibrous and mucous layers of the vocal cord both vibrate, whilst the larynx and the pharynx contract and the glottis tightens; whilst in the head voice, the larynx is relaxed, the glottis opened, the pharynx distended, and the mucous layer alone of the vocal cord vibrates, ought he to try to produce these special actions in his throat in order to give a head or chest note? And when from physiology he learns that the nasal cavities, the ethnoidal cellules, the maxillary, frontal and sphenoidal sinus communicate with his mouth and powerfully contribute to form the *timbre* of his voice, will he know any better how to modify this *timbre?* Assuredly not. Therefore, according to my own conviction, all this knowledge will not aid him in the slightest degree in understanding the lessons of a good teacher, nor in practising after his example a good respiration, a good emission of voice and a good pronunciation.

It is as though one should pretend to teach soldiers to march with commands of the following nature:

"Contract your femoral biceps!"

"Relax the triceps!"

"Distend the adducent muscles!"

They would much more readily understand:

—*One, two—one, two*—particularly if the corporal were to add the example to the word.

This makes us think of the scene between M. Jourdain and his teacher of philosophy:

Master: "The vowel A is formed by opening wide the mouth: A."

M. Jourdain: "A, A. Yes!"

Master: "The vowel E is formed by bringing the lower jaw close to the upper one: A, E."

Jourdain: "A, E; A, E. Faith, yes! Ah, how fine that is!"

Master: "And the vowel I, by again bringing both jaws together and stretching the corners of the mouth out towards the ears, A, E, I."

Jourdain: "A, E, I, I, I. That is true. Long live science!"

Master: "The vowel O is formed by opening the jaws again, and bringing the corners of the lips together: O."

Jourdain: "O, O. Nothing can be truer; A, E, I, O, I, O. That is admirable. I, O; I, O."

Master: "The opening of the mouth makes a sort of little circle that represents an O . . . I will thoroughly explain all these curiosities. . . ." *

There he is well advanced. Will he know any better how to speak afterwards?

Whether such a study of the physiology of the voice is desirable for the professor even is debatable; perhaps (?) at the utmost it might enlighten him in the selection of the exercises of pure vocal gymnastics

* Molière, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Act I., Scene VI.

that might suit such or such a pupil, but then only on the express condition that this study is complete and not superficial, as is almost always the case. To make it complete, it must be extended over the whole range of the respiratory apparatus, from the lungs and the muscles of the breast to the nasal cavities and the nose, which play an important part in the formation of the *timbre:* which would inevitably lead, in order to arrive at a comprehension, physiologically speaking, of the functions of all these organs, intimately related as they are with all the others, to a study of general anatomy. If this utility were really demonstrated, the best professor of singing would be the doctor—the laryngologist,—which will not bear examination. There is nothing worse than the demi-savants, and nothing more pretentious. The old professors of the great Italian period of the *bel canto,* who, we must frankly confess, could easily give us lessons in the art of forming the voice and rendering it flexible, did not trouble themselves with this superfluous knowledge. They proceeded empirically, it will be said; that is possible, but what is certain is that they obtained results which we no longer do.

## II. The Bel Canto, Relation of Singing to the Genius of a Language, Methods, Vocalization and Period of Daily Studies

It is true to say also that nowadays what is demanded of singers is no longer what was demanded of them then. At that time, the ideal singing was

an almost instrumental virtuosity, an incredible agility, comparable to that of the flute, trills, roulades, chromatic scales, arpeggios, ornaments of every kind and *gorgheggi* * which skilful singers did not hesitate to introduce into the score of the composer, even in the most dramatic situations, even to the extent of disfiguring it and rendering it entirely unrecognizable, with the sole and frankly-avowed aim of setting in relief their prodigious ability and showing off their most beautiful notes. Some of them had favourite features, cadences, or finales, that they adopted invariably in all their *rôles*. This was the reign of singing for the sake of song, and it must be acknowledged that the music was only a pretext for vocal flutterings and warblings of the utmost elegance. The composers lent themselves to this with complete indifference and were perfectly willing to accept this collaboration of the singer, provided that it indirectly attracted success and plaudits for the work. Certain operas of this epoch show this clearly. In them we can scarcely see anything but *canevas* destined to disappear under numberless *fiorituras* completely disfiguring the author's original idea.

It is at this point that Manual Garcia,† one of the last representatives of this school, cynically entitles "Of Changes," one of the chapters of his work, in which we may read such things as this: "In tracing their ideas, the authors counted upon the accent and the accessories that the talent of the singer was able

* *Gorghegghiare*, in Italian means to trill, to warble like birds.

† Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing.

to add to the work. There are different kinds of pieces which, by reason of their nature, are confided to the free and learned inspiration of the executant."

In that beautiful age of the Italian *bel canto*, when the singer's mission was very different from the conception of to-day, to study a *rôle* consisted in adjusting it to one's own measure by almost entirely re-making the vocal part so as to show off the eminent virtuosity of the interpreter.

The sentiment was only a secondary consideration: an artist was reputed to have a heart when he held a sufficiently prolonged organ-point on the last note but one of a phrase.

All that is of small importance. What is certain is that in order to attain that prodigious degree of agility, which was then the pinnacle of the singer's art, the Italians were in possession of admirable methods, and knew how to work patiently for long years without breaking their voices and without tiring them.

The modern art has altogether different requirements. It demands infinitely less virtuosity; and, in revenge, it exacts a respect for the note written, an artistic intelligence, a concord of sentiment between the poetic text and the musical accent, an expressive and emotional intensity which the eminent singers of the beautiful Italian period made the least of their cares. We strive to charm and to interest more than to astonish. With them it was the contrary.

There is still another thing to be considered. People do not sing in the same way in all countries, and

they could not do so. The manner of singing is intimately connected with the genius of a language. Thus it is that the art of vocalization, which attains its highest point among the Italians, whose language, rich in vowels, in long and short syllable and in rhythmical accents, is already almost a music, would not have been able to develop among the Germans, who sing almost constantly upon consonants. These two languages, so opposed by their origin and by their sonority, could but engender two diametrically opposed schools of singing, one energetic and guttural, the other supple and elegant. The French singers, of Latin race, sided more closely with their Italian brethren, whom they for a long time forced themselves to imitate, sometimes succeeding. Thus they were easily led to believe that the Germans did not know how to sing, simply because they sang differently from themselves. This is quite as simple as if they believed that the Germans did not know how to speak because they did not speak French. A German *Lied* becomes as ridiculous when we sing it in the Italian style as would be a Cavatina of Donizetti's translated into German. To every idiom, its own music and national interpretation. That is why a work when translated loses the half of its savour and poetry; homogeneous though it was, it becomes whimsical, and the interpreter, however talented he may be, more especially if he possesses much talent and tact, finds that he has lost his bearings, and is left hesitating between the spirit of the literary text and the musical style, which do not accord.

This explains perfectly why the art of singing, which is essentially in accord with the various languages with which it is associated, cannot be taught in the same manner in all countries, which would be an offence against good taste, since the results obtainable are not the same. It is quite natural that the professors, French, English, German and Italian, should employ different procedures, having to attain dissimilar ends: this can be very readily understood. But what is strange, and what I do not undertake to explain, is the absolute lack of unity in the teaching of singing, and the prodigious diversity of methods extolled for this end, that we meet with at every step, without passing the limits of the territory of any given nationality whatsoever. Let us take France. It seems, does it not, that there is and that there can be only one single true way of singing in good French. Very well. Whilst for a very long time all the violin or piano methods, not in France alone, but in the whole world, resemble one another point by point and appear to have been minutely copied from one another, yet the most extraordinary divergencies continue to exist with regard to the fundamental principles of the study of an art which seems so simple in itself; for incontestably, "Song is as natural as speech to mankind." *

The most curious thing about it is that it is the same in all countries, and that, notwithstanding the most praiseworthy efforts, professors of singing have not yet come to an agreement as to the best manner

* A. Lavignac, *La musique et les musiciens.*

of teaching singing. That "the art of singing up to the present time does not employ technical terms of a signification that is accepted by all;" that "two singers, talking, one after another, of their registers, mediums, or passages, are perhaps not speaking of the same vocal particulars," * this alone is a regrettable matter; but this may be only a question of language, or vocabulary. But what is still more grave and strange at the same time is to maintain complete divergences regarding the very processes of teaching and their applications. So many professors, so many methods, and frequently diametrically opposed: this is indeed incomprehensible. And most astonishing of all is the fact that there is not a single one of these teachers, I mean here the great masters, who have schools and are qualified to write methods, there is not one, I repeat, who has not produced some remarkable pupils, who, in their turn, invent new processes and obtain good results from them.

I find an amusing sally on this subject in Rubinstein's *Aphorisms:*

"The doctor and the professor of singing resemble one another in many points: the doctor can heal or kill, he may make a false diagnosis; he gladly invents new remedies, and always finds that the doctor who preceded him did not understand the case.

The professor of singing can place a voice or spoil it; he can take an alto for a soprano voice, and *vice versa;* he is anxious to invent new methods of teaching,

* Dr. Castex, *Les maladies de la voix.*

and always finds also that the professor who preceded him gave the pupil faulty instructions.

The public treats these specialists both in the same way. It has confidence in charlatans. Everybody recommends with equal willingness his doctor, or his singing-master; and, after all, it is still Nature who is the best physician and the best singing-master." *

Upon my word, this is as well conceived as it is wittily written.

Does this mean that song is such a natural thing that all methods are good, or all useless? One would almost be tempted to believe so. In fact, some professors do without them entirely, and invent exercises appropriate to the particular nature of each of their pupils, helping to develop the qualities and root out the faults in proportion as the need makes itself felt. They may very well be in the right. Moreover, after carefully reading over a couple of dozen celebrated methods that I was already thoroughly well acquainted with, I would not venture to affirm here a preference for one more than another. I would rely upon the advice of experience and good sense, and whatever may be the method that my reader has in his hand, he will find nothing in it that can contradict me.

In the study of Singing, just as in the instrumental studies that form the subject of the preceding chapter, there is room for two distinct parts, one of mechanism, which here is called *Vocalization*, and the other of the *Art of Singing*, properly so-called, comprising

* A. Rubinstein.

style, phrasing and the intelligent taking of breath, etc.

It is proper to begin always with vocalization. To vocalize is to sing *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, *ou*, and *eu*, that is to say, the vowels or diphthongs, without making use of consonants.

In general, people vocalize on *a* alone, which is wrong. We ought to exercise successively on all the vowels that belong to the language in which we sing, as well as their various modifications, which are more or less favourable to the emission of sound, some low, others high.

The study of vocalization comprises exercises of all kinds for flexibility, from simple separate sounds to the complete *subjection* of the voice, according to Faure's happy expression, by going through the scales, arpeggios, chromatic figures, the traits and roulades derived from them, appogiatura, and trill. It also includes the placing and emission of the voice, its bearing, the union of the registers, passing from one to another (passing from the chest to the head register, which is often called simply *the passage*, is one of the greatest difficulties in the art of singing), the purity of the *timbre* and the certainty of intonation, etc. It is the study of the voice considered as an instrument.

For this entire part of vocal technique, it is certain that we cannot be better inspired than with the ideas and procedure, if not the methods even, which are honoured in every country, of the old Italian school, which carried this study to the extreme of perfection.

I think it will be interesting to borrow a few paragraphs from a work already cited, which, although written by a Spaniard, the son of a Spaniard,* justly stands as an authority on the question of Italian singing.

"It is not sufficient to pick up a few notions of music in haste; artists are not improvized; they form themselves by long preparation; their talent must be developed early, and by a careful education and special studies.

The special education of the singer consists of the study of *solfeggio*, then that of an instrument, and *lastly*, that of singing and harmony."

He does not say *what* instrument; but he could scarcely have any other in view than the piano, the harp, or the guitar,—instruments of accompaniment. Observe also that he places this study *of an instrument* before that of singing itself, and that he demands a knowledge of harmony. The singers of that day were relatively much better musicians than those of to-day, who, however, on account of the evolution of music and the style of the works that they have to interpret, should have need of much more than their predecessors had.

"The voice in its natural state is nearly always rude, uneven, uncertain, trembling even, and finally, unwieldy and limited in range. Study alone, enlightened and determined study, can fix the intonation, purify the *timbre*, and perfect the intensity and elasticity of tone. By study, we level the aspersities

* Manuel Garcia.

and incoherences of the registers, and, by uniting one register with another, we extend the dimensions of the voice. Study enables us to acquire agility,—a quality too greatly neglected, in general. We must submit to severe exercises not only the organs that are rebellious, but also those which, led away by a dangerous facility, can not master their own movements." This deserves particular attention, for "this apparent flexibility is allied itself with a lack of clearness, *tenuto*, correctness, assurance and breadth; that is to say, with the absence of all the elements of accent and style."

All this is admirably thought out and expressed; it is a complete programme of the studies of vocalization; there is not a word to be added to it or taken from it. This is exactly the way in which the work of vocal mechanism must be conducted in order that it may be brought to that state of suppleness that will allow it to attack difficulties of every kind, and to lend itself to the expression of every emotion.

We will not become dull over the question of the classification and nomenclature of voices, upon which all professors are not absolutely in accord, which, to tell the truth, might well be nothing but a simple affair of words; nor over the exact delimitation of the registers in each voice, which varies with individuals, and can be determined with precision only by a skilful professor after a profound and often-renewed examination of the organ of each pupil.

All these vocalization exercises, as well as those of which we are about to speak, should never absorb more than two hours of the day, divided into halves

or quarters of an hour, which may be further subdivided with periods of rest, if fatigue makes its appearance.

When the pupil has succeeded in getting his voice into such complete subjection as to be able to overcome with ease the majority of the material difficulties of execution, another period opens in which it is a question of forming a style for himself, or to speak more correctly, of studying the different styles.

Kastner excellently says: "To sing is not only to produce with the voice different intonations at random, or in conformity with the instinct that we have for that object, it is also to make audible, according to the rules of the art, varied sounds intended to express the passions and sentiments of the heart."

This, in fact, is the veritable aim, and the long and complicated study of vocalization has no other use than to prepare the organ for the expression of the idea, in order to be able to employ it, through its entire range and with the plenitude of its powers, as freely and easily as we make use of the speaking voice.

In this new study of a higher order, the superiority of the Italian school totally disappears, and our efforts must be concentrated especially upon what is good diction in the language in which we are singing. Clearness of articulation and pronunciation is of the greatest importance in singing. If the voice did not have that superiority over the instruments of uniting words to music, it would be surpassed by a great number of them, in compass, or agility, or even in richness of *timbre*. What renders it incomparable

and places it above the admirable sound-mechanism invented by the ingenuity of the lute-makers is precisely that inimitable faculty of explaining and determining with words the sentiment it expresses, and expresses with an intensity which can not be attained by the spoken language alone. It places the title beneath the drawing.

Now, if the listener does not clearly catch the words, a great part of the interest is lost for him, and the voice is nothing more than an instrument like the others. "A singer who is not understood subjects his audience to annoyance, and destroys a great part of its musical pleasure by forcing it to perpetual efforts to catch the meaning of the words." *

It is important then to resume the study of the vowels, already sketched out in the course of the work of vocalization, but now from the linguistic and declamatory point of view, and to add to it that of the consonants, which will acquire very great importance in the intense expression of violent or pathetic emotion. A few lessons in good diction, that may be taken with a good comedian or tragedian, would not be at all out of place, and would help one to grasp the "infinite shades" † that may tinge the accentuation of every vowel as it traverses the larynx, shades by means of which the true singer knows how to express in turn tenderness, fatuity, violence, indignation, indifference, love, hatred, anger, hypocrisy, frankness, kindness, joy, irony, faith, magnanimity,

* Burja, *Memoires de l'Academie des Sciences de Berlin.*

† Ch. de Brosses, *Traité de la formation mécanique des langues.*

pardon, candour, courage, triumph, meditation, grief, —in fact the entire gamut of human passions. The function of the consonants is rather to increase the force of the sentiment; the more energetically they are pronounced, the more impression the words produce upon the hearer. "The consonant expresses the force of the sentiment as the vowel expresses its nature."

Those whose syllabic articulation is lacking in firmness may try an excellent means indicated by Faure, which consists in practicing singing, or simply reading in a loud voice, keeping the teeth clenched and nevertheless forcing oneself to pronounce clearly and make every syllable distinctly heard. "The obstacle that we meet with in doing this forces the muscles of the lips and tongue to efforts that develop their vigour and agility."

Both professor and pupil in fact should set themselves to combat and to vanquish, or at least to attenuate, all the vices of pronunciation or emission, at the head of which we must place the tremolo, one of the most horrible of all, which can only be excused in singers made decrepit by age. Rossini said that old singers ought to be killed. It is to be noted that this frightful tremolo, or perpetual trembling of the voice, which many male and female singers who are still young, but destitute of artistic common sense, seem to take pleasure in cultivating as a means of expression(?), is found hardly anywhere except in France, and a little in Italy, where however it was severely proscribed at the great epoch; that we find hardly any examples among the English singers; and

that there is not the slightest trace of it among the Germans, who manage to express emotion in a more musical manner. Next comes the *grassayement* * a fault frequent in southerners, who are easily taught to get rid of it by a few exercises of the tongue familiar to everybody. There are also the pronunciation of Z instead of J or Ch; the stutter, as well as that disagreeable sonority that is wrongly called *singing through the nose,* or *talking through the nose:* I say wrongly, because in truth the voice, in order to be pure and beautiful in quality, should escape in part through the nostrils, and, on the contrary, it produces the defective *timbre* that we improperly call nasal when it does not pass through them. We can see this by pinching the nostrils while we sing or talk. We ought therefore to say that the fault lies in *not singing through the nose.* But this is a digression.

There still remain many more things to study: the art of properly managing respiration, and distributing it in accordance with the exigencies of the musical discourse; that of punctuating and scanning a verse well; of shading and accenting the syllables from the purely grammatical point of view quite as much as by reason of the degree of expressive importance they bear;—all this, and even this is not all, is what one has to learn from a professor of high style, diction and lyrical declamation, that is to say, from really a great artist.

But, in order to teach these things, this great artist has no absolute need to be himself a singer. Every

* A thick pronunciation of the R.

man of taste, who possesses a pure and elevated æsthetic sense, can give most profitable advice to a singer, who thenceforward is in full possession of his vocal powers, whose organ is in complete subjection, and who, knowing all the processes in detail, will know how to apply them for himself so as to obtain the effects that are demanded of him. Having reached this point, the singer can again find an excellent master in a composer who will make him study his works, and will be more favourably situated than anybody else to make him understand their correct interpretation and the benefit that is to be derived from them. To work thus successively under various composers of merit is perhaps even the best exercise for mastering style during this final period of attaining perfection, the one that opens the vastest horizon, and that best enables us to seize the function of the singer in art.

An erudite instrumentalist, well instructed in music and literature, eclectic, having read and studied a great deal, an experienced orchestral leader, and a cathedral organist, can also fill this same office and serve as precious guides, whereas they would have been only mediocre teachers, or at least very inefficient ones, when it was a question of placing and developing the voice.

Since we have just spoken of cathedral organists (*kapellmeister*) let us take advantage of it by saying that an excellent thing, so far as concerns the higher study of the art of singing, is to sing frequently in churches and temples. The sober style imposed by the dignity of the place obliges the singer

to employ only simple and noble effects, that lend a breadth and firmness to his art and his individual manner in their entirety of which something advantageous to him will permanently remain.

Let us resume. The study of singing, leaving out those preliminary infantile studies, the undeniable advantages of which we have demonstrated, gains by being undertaken immediately the change is completed and the voice finds itself formed; that is to say, between seventeen and eighteen years of age in women, and eighteen and twenty in men. Earlier would be dangerous, as the lack of stability of the vocal cords would expose them to being forced or strained, especially in the low register, and this in turn would cause the loss of the high tones and the whole head-register for the women.

But we may begin later in life if the voice has not been foundered by abuse, and if it has preserved its suppleness. From thirty to thirty-five years for men, and from twenty-six to thirty for women may be considered the extreme limits.

A beginning must always be made with *solfeggio;* and, just as soon as one is somewhat of a musician, the voice must be disciplined by the study of vocalization. Concurrently, the use of the piano must be acquired.

Singing, properly so-called, with the adjunction of words, must not come till later.

The period of study every day should always be very short. Three or four half-hours, wisely scattered through the day, and kept far enough apart

from one another to avoid all fatigue, are the best arrangement that can be made. To work more than this would be foolish. If with this small amount of work no progress is made, nothing will be gained by increasing it; the fault must be sought elsewhere; and if it does not consist in some defect of conformation or organization, organic deficiency or lack of musical aptitude, we can only attribute it to a bad method of work, or a bad choice of exercises.

### III. Reading, Importance of Musical Studies, Studies Necessary for the Stage and Physical Requirements for an Opera Singer

Let us add that it is quite permissible to lighten and vary the *solfeggio* studies by the sight-reading of melodies with words, at first selecting very simple ones, such as popular songs. In practicing this exercise of sight-reading, so precious for the singer, it is necessary to proceed as we have already said for the instrumentalist; first run your eyes over the whole of the words, so as to get some idea of their character and sentiment, look over the melodic contour in the same way, so as not to be surprised by the modulations, changes of time, or any difficulties whatsoever; then, having once started, go right ahead, keeping good time, without trying to correct any errors committed, and taking care of the shading just as though it was a question of a piece already learnt. When the singer is a harmonist as well, a case of extreme rarity, alas! he reads the lines of the accompani-

ment, especially the bass, at the same time as the voice line, and, by this means, his task becomes incomparably easier. But, by an aberration that does no honour to his artistic intelligence, the singing-pupil in France scarcely ever understands what a great advantage it would be to him to be an excellent, trained musician. He even seems to glory in his ignorance and to delight in it. For him, music and singing are two absolutely distinct things. Singing appears to him as a noble art beside which music is nothing but a sort of inferior and contemptible art.

I know not where such outlandish ideas can have arisen, but it is certain that they are very deeply seated, and that they shackle the studies of young singers to a ridiculous extent. How often we hear at the Conservatoire, before the full board of examiners, absurd reasonings of this nature: "I did not come here to learn music, I came to learn singing." * What would singers think of a comedian who was stubborn enough not to want to learn how to read, and by that very course prevented his own access to all literary study? That would scarcely be any more stupid. But that does not happen. This is a trait of carelessness and laziness peculiar to the singer, who thinks himself the king of all Creation as soon as he possesses a very strong and roaring voice.

Let us regretfully say however that this organic fatuity does not exist in Germany, where singers, who are infinitely better advised, are not ashamed to study music; that it is scarcely to be found in Italy, Eng-

* A. Lavignac, *Les Gaietés du Conservatoire.*

land, Holland, or Belgium; and that it is especially prevalent in France;—of which fact we have no reason to feel proud.

For a long time, I was in close relations with a charming tenor who was the possessor of a voice of very high range and strong *timbre*. This, added to the way of writing the tenor in the G clef (that is to say, an octave higher than the real sound pronounced), had given him the conviction that in a duet with a soprano, he was the one who always had the highest note. He made it a matter of *amour-propre*, and was astonished that in the scores the soprano line was always placed above the tenor. Nobody dared to contradict him, some for the sake of not causing him chagrin and others for fear of putting him in a rage, for he was exceedingly irascible. One day, however, relying on our ancient friendship, I risked an attempt to show him his error. He burst into a violent rage, pretended that I was jesting and wanted to make sport of him, and that he did not need to take lessons from anybody. . . . And we remained embroiled until his death.

Our singing-students are not willing to recognize that this ignorant vanity places them in a condition of real inferiority with regard to their foreign brethren, and that it condemns them, in addition, to remain perpetually under the tutelage of someone,—an accompanist, a tutor, or a singing-master of their theatre, and all because, incapable as they are of reading for themselves and understanding their parts, they must always be *piped* to like scholars.

It is not till later, in the course of their career, that they perceive the trouble caused by this lack of primary instruction in musical matters, and then, laboriously, clandestinely also, they again take up, and without boasting about it to anyone, the study that their simple braggadocio had led them to disdain at the favourable moment. There is not a single person who can contradict me.

This retrospective, and, for that reason, more difficult, work will be escaped by every young singer who is willing to convince himself from the very beginning of his vocal studies, that are to take so little trouble, since they ought never to exceed two hours a day, that it is as necessary for him as for every other musician seriously to study the fundamental principles of the art of which he wants to make himself the interpreter; he has all the time for it.

Musical art is thus constituted: it comprises producers, who are the composers; and interpreters, who are the singers and instrumentalists.

In this, it resembles dramatic art, wherefore Lamennais has said: "The actor is to the dramatic poet what the executant is to the composer." These two functions, without which the work of art could not exist and receive life, are indispensable and complement each other, and each has its own beauty. Just as the composer could not do without the interpreter, so the singer and the instrumentalist would have no plausibility if the author were not there to furnish them with matter for interpretation. But in order that these two agents may comprehend each other and

combine their mutual efforts, it is exceedingly necessary for a bond to exist between them, and this bond can be no other than general technique, that which unites all the branches of music and binds together all its constituents.

This is the reason that singers have certainly nothing to fear in pushing their musical instruction as far as possible. By doing so, they will only understand the better the real importance of their functions, and will know how to fulfil them intelligently, without being constantly compelled to have recourse to the help and knowledge of others.

If, while still young, they could succeed in convincing themselves of this truth, that by the study of general technique (*solfeggio*, theory, and harmony), reinforced by that of the piano, they would conquer their independence and their artistic liberty, they would attain very much higher and quicker results, and notably a more complete development of their own personality.

Too often, the young artists produced by the same school seem to have been turned out of the same mould, they have the same emission of tone, the same style, the same qualities and the same faults. This is because they have had the same masters, the same tutors, the same accompanists, and that in their impotence (which they are forced to recognize *in petto*) to direct of themselves any of their education as singers by endowing it with a personal originality, they have come to suffer the influence of the school in too constant and too exclusive a manner. With more learn-

ing, they might have been more themselves, and on that account infinitely more interesting.

In addition to their vocal and musical studies, those artists who are destined for the theatre should give attention to those that are special to scenic art; deportment, attitudes, theatrical presence and mimicry; a Roman emperor should not have the ways of a valet; —a little tragedy in view of the opera, or the lyrical drama,—a little comedy for the *opéra-comique*, or other light composition kinds—and then another matter of considerable importance is the study of the repertory.

This new collection of studies requires the intervention of two new teachers: the first, who will teach everything concerning deportment and gesture, above all else should be a man or woman of the stage, and himself possess the habits of the boards. It is not requisite for him to be a musician; a good comedian will serve very well if he cares to take the trouble to consider the somewhat special exigencies occasioned by words sung and the relative slowness of action put into music. If the attitudes are stiff or awkward, if the movements are lacking in suppleness or elegance, the best thing to do will be to join a dancing-class (there are many classes for dancing and deportment), and for men to frequent the fencing-school. There is nothing like it for acquiring swagger and ease, and for learning how to stand and move about naturally and without pretension; but this must not displace the teacher of stage-deportment in any-

thing relating to mimetics, bearing and the art of wearing costume.

As for the study of the repertory, we would gladly range ourselves on the side of those who think that there is an advantage in working with a professor, not only of our own sex, but with one whose voice resembles our own as closely as possible and who has held on the stage a position similar to the one we desire, and has even had the opportunity of playing the parts, the traditions of which we ask him to transmit to us. These conditions can be nothing but favourable; but they are far from being indispensable, and it is certain that every artist who has any experience of the stage, whether he be a singer, a leader of the orchestra, tutor, or accompanist, may perfectly conduct and bring to a happy conclusion this study that is as useful as it is interesting.

In order to be able to say that we know a *rôle*, it is not sufficient to have learned the important airs and the principal points; it is necessary to have acquired a complete knowledge and comprehension of the character, to know it entirely by heart from beginning to end, including words, music, gestures and attitudes, and to be ready to play it and sing it fully staged after a few full rehearsals. Otherwise our work is incomplete and inefficient, and will have to be done all over again some day.

It is in the course of the study of the repertory that the young lyric artist begins to perceive the extent of the fatigue that the career entails, and understands why his early teachers, on making their first examina-

tion, had to take into consideration, in addition to his purely vocal qualities, his conformation, his general health, and in fact everything that might serve to foretell the force of resistance necessary for the *exploitation* of his organ.

What is fatiguing is not learning to sing, as we have seen; it is not singing; it is the singing of an entire work in the course of one evening, with short *entr'actes* that scarcely constitute rests, since most of the time is employed in changing the costume; it is having to begin again the next day with the same work, or another one; it is having to dominate the orchestra, especially the modern orchestra; it is having to rehearse early in the morning; it is having constantly to learn and to assimilate new *rôles;* it is having to travel as they do in artistic tours, when for most of the time they travel during the night, to rehearse at daybreak and play in the evening; it is singing in concerts, which necessitates fresh rehearsals; it is the obligation of singing at *soirées,* of being ever in the breach, or quite ready to mount guard there; it is passing through the most diverse emotions; it is being the slave of one's engagement, of not having the power to do what one likes with the day and the hour, of being unable to rest and to relax without the aid of a medical certificate; it is having to play a playful part when one's spirit is in mourning; it is being forced to sing whether one wants to or not, whether one is well or ill; finally, it is the career that everybody recognizes as one of the hardest and most burdensome as well as brilliant and full of ex-

ternal attractions. We need to be built of sand and lime to support its fatigue, particularly during the first few years, for we become inured to anything, this as well as anything else. Therefore we can not help smiling at the aberration of certain amateur singers, men and women of the fashionable world, who, however, are not devoid of talent, who naïvely class themselves with professional artists, and because one evening they may have sung, at a charity concert, a scene or an act from an opera, after much coddling and preparation, accept comparisons to their advantage. "Oh! indeed, Viscountess, you were wonderful; the opera never gave us a Marguerita that came up to your ankle!" or, "Mr. ——, with astounding fire, leaves far behind him all the artists who have ventured to attempt the part of ——, reputed so overwhelming." It would be interesting to see what would become of Mr. —— if he had to play and act this part *so overwhelming*, in its integrity, on the stage, with the orchestra and an ordinary audience; and what the Viscountess would say if anyone were to propose that she should repeat this little exercise four or five times a week, at the same time adding the four other acts, or by playing a different work every evening.

And how disillusioned would be those pretentious *dilettanti* of the art of singing if it were given to them to hear themselves turned into ridicule quite as much by the people of their own world, whom they regard as their passionate admirers, as by real artists. And if they only knew how odious they are to the composers

whom they weary to death by beseeching them to accompany them in public for the sake of thereby gaining an enthusiastic autograph letter, or a few words of vain flattery, who, sometimes out of simple politeness, sometimes from a sentiment of ironical courtesy, discharge at them a few compliments . . . of double meaning: "Dear Madame, I never heard anybody sing that as you do . . . I have never heard anything like it. . . ."

I do not say this in the least to asperse amateur talent, or to try to belittle its merit in the slightest, for, on the contrary, I am of opinion that there are amateurs of most remarkable talent, and that there may very easily exist some who equal or even surpass professional artists either in virtuosity or in elevation of style.

There are artists and amateurs of every rank, and the qualification "artist" does not imply any idea of superiority any more than that of "amateur" necessarily implies the idea of superficial or negligent studies. Unfortunately there are artists who dishonour this title, just as there are amateurs of high intelligence who possess the genius of interpretation and the most elevated sentiment. These great amateurs ought to be admired, applauded and encouraged, for they powerfully contribute to raise the artistic level; but care must be taken not to establish a parallel between them and the militant artists whose whole life is consecrated to the worship of the art, who feel their responsibility pledged, and have to conquer or to maintain by their own worth the favour

of a public, the great majority of whom are indifferent.

The amateur plays on velvet, for he never presents himself to his audience under the same conditions as the professional artist, though he is pleased to delude himself with that idea. Of the occupation, he knows nothing but the roses, and does not even suspect the endurance, the strength of will and sometimes of courage required by the stage career for him who with each note, step and gesture defends his life and reputation. It is not a question here for him of a vain matter of fashionable and ephemeral petty glory; one single failure, especially near the start, may compromise the whole future. And to what may a failure be due? To a moment of inadvertence, or distraction, an indisposition, a tired voice resulting from too many rehearsals,—to a thousand causes that do not detract from the worth of the artist in the slightest degree.

I have not to speak here of the numberless mortifications that impede the *triumphal* career of a singer: the jealousies, the cabals formed to effect the downfall of a manager, but which hit the actor first, the rivalries which, noble as they should be, become base and malignant;—all this would carry me far beyond the artistic domain; but it is none the less true that the singer who launches himself on the stage exposes himself to all these dreadful things and should be warned beforehand.

If to sustain him he did not have the love of his art and the sentiment of his dignity as an artist, to which we may more prosaically add the bait of good engage-

ments, his life, the brilliant side alone of which is seen by the great public, would be nothing but a hell disguised as Paradise.

To these cares of all kinds, must be added the constant preoccupation of the maintenance of his voice, which is not a simple object of luxury for him, far from it.

When we see the almost maternal care which the violinist and 'cellist lavish on their instruments, the minute toilette that they perform even in the tiny corners, lovingly polishing it, carefully swaddling and muffling its neck and strings with a soft woollen material when they take it out into the world; and when we see the players of an oboe, or clarinet, keeping all the parts of their outfit in a condition of scrupulous cleanliness and surrounding their reeds with all kinds of precaution and solicitude, we ask ourselves whether it is not worth while giving far greater care to the divine and living instrument, more perfect, but also more susceptible than any, the only one that can never be replaced by any tradesman, should we ever have the misfortune to let it get spoiled.

Every singer understands the utility of these cares which the ignorant public often wrongly regards as an exaggeration, or a Sybaritic practice; but not all know how to apply them judiciously, and sin sometimes by excess of precaution and sometimes by imprudence. To coddle oneself too much is in its way a mistake, for by that means one renders the organism still more sensitive to inclement weather, and the

slightest variations of temperature which nobody can completely guard against, and which then become so much the more dangerous. To brave cold, wind and humidity must be bad for any voice unless it is of an excessively rare robustness and rusticity, and even that often ends by playing the owner an ugly trick.

Everybody must learn to study his own organ, to take account of the degree of resistance or susceptibility that it offers to the perturbative action of external agents, and thus knowing the cause, adopt the preservative hygienic measures that are personally favourable to himself, without troubling to learn whether they would suit his neighbour, or recommending them to him in turn, for there do not exist two voices identically alike, nor two that should be treated exactly in the same way; which is what we must allow thoroughly to penetrate our minds. Let us add that the imagination often comes into play. It does not therefore follow that because an able singer comes to you and says: " This is what I do," you should think you were doing well by doing the same and taking him as a model. What is excellent for one may be ill suited to another, and *vice versa;* everybody should employ for this effect the means specially appropriate to his own nature, and only those. Hence arises the necessity for the singer to know himself, as the instrumentalist knows his instrument, since he is his own instrument, or more correctly speaking, he carries his instrument in himself.

## IV. Hygiene of the Voice

This chapter on singing would therefore not be complete if we neglected to speak a little about vocal hygiene.

First, we will borrow from a special work some lines, the first of which corroborate certain ideas expressed at the opening of this study:* "The education of the voice should not be abbreviated. Prolonged studies assure a long career, and if we see an early end to voices which seemed to have the promise of a long future, it is often because the period of preparatory study has been shortened, in the haste to utilize an organ full of promise as soon as possible. It is because it has not been sufficiently trained. Let us recall the good examples: Caffarelli, a pupil of Porpora, and Rubini, working six or seven years before appearing in public." Many other names might be cited; in fact, almost all the great artists who have had a long career, and among our contemporaries, Mme. Miolan Carvalho, Mme. Viardot, Mme. Malibran, Duprez, Faure, etc. "The voice should be trained from infancy, long before the change. It does not differ in that from other gymnastics. An artist who goes late into the career may sometimes grace it well, but almost always for a short period. Let a child give free play to the various notes of his singing voice, and as soon as his change is completed, he will find it to be well exercised in the new key-board that has fallen to his lot."

* Dr. A. Castex, *Hygiene de la voix parlée et chantée.*

All rational physical exercises of a nature to conserve the general health are good for the singer during the period of study, as also later, especially those the effect of which is to develop the muscles of the chest: horsemanship, fencing, dumb-bells, swimming (if the reaction is good), and canoeing are very favourable sports, provided they are used prudently, and there is no exposure to catching cold. One should abstain from exercise completely, however, when one has to sing either at the theatre or at a concert; on that day, relative repose is necessary. Faure even recommends "avoiding long walks, or drives, in carriage, or railroad car," on account of the trepidation, and then he proceeds to advise the singer to select his rooms in proximity to the theatre.

The principal precautions to be taken, apart from violent and inopportune exercises, are: to abstain *totally* from singing, either in public or even for exercise while a cold lasts, or a sore throat, or even a simple hoarseness, if the larynx is susceptible, and at the slightest indisposition with women; not to abuse and founder the voice, either by singing uselessly or by forcing it to produce tones beyond its normal range, especially high ones; to avoid violent laughter, too loud talk and long speeches, as also vociferation and fatiguing cries; not to play the piano just before singing; so far as concerns dressing, never to compress either the neck, or the body, or the feet; for an alimentary regimen, a simple and strengthening menu, "little or no alcohol, nor anything that is irritating to the throat (mustard, cayenne pepper, etc.). Butch-

ers' meat, red or white, fish, eggs, milk dishes, mollusks, oysters, mussels and snails, rice, tapioca, potatoes, fruits in general (except nuts and almonds), and unfermented cheese should form the basis of the repast; many singers attribute a special virtue to the raw egg; it can do no harm to anybody and may be especially good for some throats. Avoid singing during digestion, or at least for long; on the day of performance, it is prudent to dine at least three hours before the curtain rises. Nearly all singers smoke, but almost all physicians are of opinion that it would be better if they did not; in any case, what appears certain is that the bad habit that some smokers of cigarettes have of inhaling the smoke has the effect of favouring the production of phlegm. Many male and female singers during the *entr'actes* or before each entry on the stage feel the need of clearing the voice by the absorption of some liquid or other: so long as it is only a question of cold bouillon, lemonade, sirups, coffee, even Bordeaux, Malaga, or beer, it will not hurt them, but Champagne must be distrusted, also alcoholic liqueurs and all that contains alcohol, such as grog and punch, which, after producing an effect of excitation might have a totally contrary effect by reaction, not to speak of other inconveniences by which they risk offending or scandalizing the audience. On returning into the wings, or green-room, one generally finds oneself passing suddenly from an overheated atmosphere into one that is sensibly colder; moreover, the larynx and bronchial tubes, ' congested by the action,' are in a condition of extreme sensitiveness, and more

than ever susceptible to the influence of every morbid cause. It is then advisable immediately to cover the neck and shoulders (especially *decolletée* women, of course), to breathe exclusively through the nose, so that the air may be warmed by passing through the nasal cavities, and consequently to avoid all conversation." *

The singer who is careful over the good working of his larynx, without being forced to live as an anchorite, ought systematically to forbid himself any departure from his *régime* and all excesses of whatsoever nature. If he desires his voice to obey him, he must make himself its slave and set it a good example. "Freshness, spontaneity and strength are the most precious qualities of the voice, but they are also, of course, the most fragile. The voice that once loses never regains them, its *timbre* remains cracked without recovery. We call a voice *broken* when it is reduced to this exhaustion. A similar prostration of powers sometimes manifests itself from the period of study, when we may attribute it to the bad management of the pupil's studies. The error would be equally deplorable whether the nature of the organ had been misunderstood, or whether anyone had attempted by obstinate labour to convert the voice from low to high. The inevitable result of the latter attempt would be the destruction of the voice. The studies should tend to develop the natural gifts of an organ, and not to transform them nor to stretch them beyond measure." * Thus far, his advice deals with management

* Dr. A. Castex, *Hygiene de la voix parlée et chantée.*

of study quite as much as hygiene properly so-called; what follows applies more particularly to the latter: "Singers, who are so strongly interested in the preservation of their instrument, the most delicate and fragile of them all, will understand the necessity of the minute care to be taken to prevent its total loss or even any change in it. First of all, they should avoid excesses of any kind in regimen, habits and conduct. There is no excess that does not immediately exercise a deleterious action on the voice." The enumeration of excesses follows. "All these excesses fatigue the organ and render it hoarse for the time being; and if often renewed cannot fail to destroy it." *

Let us add finally that an excellent practice from a hygienic point of view, as well as a process of study, consists in effecting every morning before breakfast a complete cleansing of the vocal apparatus by means of gargles and nasal douches with warm borated water, and immediately afterward practicing a few vocalization exercises. This is what Faure designates by the suggestive term of "toilette of the voice."

## V. The Accompaniment

Every singer who is anxious to bring into prominence the qualities of his style should attach enormous importance to the matter of being accompanied well, either by the piano or orchestra. If he is troubled in the slightest degree by the accompaniment, he loses

* M. Garcia.

all his faculties, being hampered in his proceedings. He becomes stiff and awkward, and is no longer himself; it is necessary that he should be able to sing in public as he does at home, without any more constraint.

No artist nor amateur should expose himself to a misadventure of this nature.

If it is a question of singing with the orchestra, the conductor will be the first to require at least one rehearsal, and thus all will be well. But if it is a question of singing either at a concert or an evening party, even among friends, accompanied by the piano, two things should always be inquired into. The first is whether the piano is strictly in tune, and whether it has been recently tuned in the diapason to which the singer is accustomed (in France, the normal diapason); for if the piano has several false notes, it is the singer who will be suspected of singing false, and nobody will think of incriminating the instrument; and if the piano, although true, is tuned in too high or too low a diapason, it will no longer agree with the *tessitura* of the voice, which will find itself displaced and will no longer be able to produce the studied effects with precision. The second thing is to make sure of a very good accompanist. For this, it is an incontestable fact that, when the situation permits of it, the best thing is to have a professional accompanist, always the same one, whom you take with you, who is acquainted with all your ways, and with whom you feel entirely at ease. When this is impossible, it is highly necessary to rehearse with the artist who is to be at the piano; unless, at least, you know him

from having been accompanied by him before, you must not be satisfied with a simple sketch, or with a few scattered indications, or the general movement, a *rallentando* here, a *pianissimo* there; that is not enough, a veritable complete rehearsal is necessary, and it is not complete until the moment when the singer feels tranquil and sure of being well seconded. There are virtuoso-pianists who do not know how to accompany, either because they have not the instinct, or because they are not used to it; we have attended to them in another part of this book. It is necessary to beware of them, for they are very annoying, and to prefer to them an artist who possesses the special qualities required, which are docility, abnegation of personal effect and a peculiar characteristic style.

The principal qualities that a singer should seek in an accompanist are the following: 1.—To be a very able piano-player and an excellent sight-reader. 2.—To know how to efface himself and follow with elasticity the shading and the slight infractions of the rhythm. 3.—To have sufficient initiative to cover an error on the part of the singer and guide him if the need arises. The last two qualities that appear to contradict one another are both equally indispensable, and it is the difficulty of finding them united in the same person that is the cause of the extreme rarity of perfect accompanists.

In sum, it should be thoroughly recognized that the most brilliant singer loses all his power if he is awkwardly accompanied; and that, inversely, the most mediocre singer can acquire a certain prestige in the

hands of an accompanist who knows how to manage him and to bring out his few good qualities.

Every experienced artist knows this, and will not allow himself to be accompanied by the first comer; beginners are not sufficiently careful about this; it is nevertheless quite as dangerous for them, for if the old-stagers are very properly careful not to appear except under advantageous conditions, in order to keep intact the reputation they have acquired, the young ones, on their part, have yet to establish theirs, and ought not to neglect anything that may help to make them appreciated; and the constraint resulting from the fact of being ill supported and finding insufficient assistance in the accompaniment may go so far as completely to paralyze their efforts. On many occasions, I have personally witnessed the distress to which they are put by a defective accompaniment, so that in affirming that an excellent accompanist doubles the powers of the singer, I have only one fear, and that is of understating the truth.

In a restricted space, short pieces, melodies and *lieder*, as not requiring great development of voice, acquire an exquisite charm and an intimate flavour by being accompanied by the singer himself, if he is sufficient of a pianist for it; nothing is more delightful: absolutely master of his effects, since he has nobody to count with but himself, the artist can give himself free rein and abandon himself to all the caprices of his inspiration, and his interpretation is thus clothed with a character of sincerity, unity and penetration that is difficult to realize under other conditions.

# PART IV

## THE VARIOUS STUDIES NECESSARY FOR COMPOSERS

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### I. The Creative Faculty and Higher Musical Studies

No study, however ably it may be conducted, can result in producing a composer worthy of the name out of any individual who is not natively endowed with that entirely special instinct that leads one to create and invent combinations of sounds, and which in various degrees is called having ideas, having the creative faculty, and lastly, having the sacred fire, or having genius; for there is no doubt that one may have a little genius, facility, originality, gleams of genius, or have a great deal of genius. There are little geniuses and great geniuses, these words are currently employed. One may even have genius without suspecting it, although the contrary is much more frequently the case, alas! With some it is a natural gift, as is a faculty for figures, or magnetic power with others. It even becomes a function: Saint-Saëns says of himself, without for a moment thinking of glorifying himself or being the least bit vain about it, that he "produced music as an apple-tree produces apples,"

simply because he was so constituted. He who is endowed with this faculty experiences, in fact, an irresistible necessity of producing, of creating music, just as the professional assassin feels the need of killing some one, or the Newfoundland dog that of dragging a drowning man out of the water.

This is why so many young composers reveal their vocation from infancy, as we have already said, by the propensity for putting their ideas down on paper, when as yet they know none of the theoretic elements except what they have been able to divine. Newfoundland pups and future assassins must also in some manner give a foretaste of their aptitudes. Buffon has said: "Nature gives the force of genius, the cast of character and the mould of heart; education only modifies the whole."

But though it is impossible for us to create such faculties at will, yet to a certain extent we can try to develop the germ by education, of course on condition that the germ, minute though it be, really exists, just as we can also try to stifle it and prevent its flowering; for, if it is possible for us to annihilate it and hinder it from manifesting itself, of which there is no doubt, it is no less certain that by setting inverse procedure in action we ought to be able to come to its assistance. It is perhaps in the examination of what would be the worst culture-liquid for the microbe of genius in its native state that we can determine with certainty first what must be avoided and then what must be sought to favour its growth and blossoming.

Among the worst conditions, we may certainly place

the living in some forlorn region far from every intellectual centre, isolation, or association exclusively with common people who are totally destitute of instruction, the absence of all affection, employment in manual labour of a kind that demands no intellectual effort, ignorance of all manifestation of any art whatsoever, in a word, all that constitutes the most brutish existence. I firmly believe that a young man who has been brought up from his infancy till the age of twenty-four under such conditions, which are difficult but not impossible to find in combination, will never distress his family by manifesting a strong determination to devote himself to dramatic composition.

Therefore, it is the counterpoise of this brute education that must be adopted in the broadest sense if we wish to furnish the divine creative faculty with every chance to reveal and assert itself, and if we wish to provide this young grain with a good soil and the intellectual fertilizer that it needs.

To arrive at this result, it is necessary to bring to the fore, parallel with the purely musical studies, literary, scientific and philological studies, and push them as far as possible; to read a great deal, and serious books rather than frivolous works; to study the great poets, those near relatives of great musicians; to know the rules of versification and prosody, so as to know how to distribute the accents and respirations in the vocal works; to frequent the museums, to learn to admire the beautiful under all its forms, including Nature, which is not to be neglected the most, and to this end, to travel, to travel a great deal, as was the

advice of Montaigne, who had not music especially in mind: "What is wonderfully good for education is to visit foreign countries for the sake of rubbing and polishing our brains against those of others." When travelling, which is much easier to-day than when he recommended it, we must know how to take interest in everything,—local manners, usages, traditional customs that have lasted, costumes, architecture, beauties of nature; manifestations of art; learn to appreciate the great painters and sculptors of each country, for one does not know much when one knows only what is done at home, even as one is not a great lord if one has never touched anything but music; seek intellectual circles and the society of artists, and listen to their conversation, for I would not venture to affirm that to a certain extent genius is not contagious; choose one's friends among men of high intellectual culture and take interest in their labours of whatever nature they may be; go to the theatre often, not the lyric stage alone, but also the good theatres of tragedy, comedy and drama; and try by every imaginable means constantly to enlarge one's mind, broaden the field of one's intelligence, and elevate one's mind; such should be the constant aim of all young musicians who aspire to become veritable composers in the highest and best acceptation of the term.

It is quite certain that most of these notions might be considerably abridged or even completely neglected if the limit of our ambition was to write a few little light pieces of no pretensions to artistic character, such as a country dance, or the common accompani-

ments of a popular song. That is *musical slang*, which answers only to instinct and facile expression and does not require any kind of study. The maker of music must not be confounded with the composer; and here we have in mind only those who have noble aspirations and want to mount to the higher spheres of this art. Now there is not one of our counsels that will not be of use to the latter. It might be thought, for example, that the recommendation to dive deeply into literary studies and reading the poets is addressed specially to those who intend to write for the stage: it is not so at all, for there is no more profoundly philosophical style than that of the String Quartet or that of the Symphony which is derived from it, or rather which is its extension, so strongly do certain quartets appear to be reductions of symphonies and to have been conceived for the orchestra. One might think that it is not a matter of importance to have travelled much in order to produce beautiful melodies, but this is a mistake, for, without having to regard it as an indispensable condition, yet very often the contemplation of beautiful mountain scenery, the incidents of a sea-voyage, the emotion produced by a striking natural phenomenon or the memory that it leaves behind is the principal cause of the inspiration of a beautiful thought that reflects its grandeur, charm, or local colour.

It is a sentiment of this nature that explains the sending to Italy and Germany for three consecutive months of the winners of the *Prix de Rome*, whatever branch of art they may belong to, painters, sculptors,

architects, or musicians. In these travels, in addition to all that people learn in travelling, they find the opportunity, as Montaigne says, to rub against other intelligent artists. Inspiration may find its source in everything and everywhere, it is therefore in the most cultivated and best furnished minds that it will most frequently find the opportunity of springing forth, with equal intensity of innate genius.

There is still another study of which I have not yet spoken, precisely because it more specially concerns those who want to make a business of the stage: it is that of history, in which I include mythology, or myths and popular legends. When one has to set a poem to music, it is not a bad thing to understand it: now, one can understand it only if one knows its characters, the reasons that induce them to act in one way rather than in another, their characters, their importance, the part they have played in History, and the period in which they lived. Moreover, it is not a bad thing to know the manners of that period so as not to turn into ridicule usages that, if they are no longer of our age, were at that time infinitely venerable, and so as not to commit anachronisms and reproduce a wrong spirit.

In the same way, a knowledge of Latin is absolutely necessary for those only who are attracted by religious music; it facilitates and illuminates literary studies, nevertheless, and for this reason might be recommended to all; but if the Latin tongue is to serve as a text, it is indispensable to know it, for we cannot set to music and properly punctuate a phrase

the sense of which we cannot grasp, word for word, or words in which we do not know the long or short syllables that should be accented. Therefore, in this case, it is not sufficient to know Latin, but the special rules of Latin prosody in addition.

Finally, if I add that among the studies of the sciences, of which I have spoken somewhat briefly, that of acoustics, although the least advanced of the physical sciences, is the most important of all to the composer, for whom it will open new vistas for harmony as well as for orchestration, I shall have completed the enumeration of the branches of knowledge outside of music that seem to me to be necessary for the student composer.

All these things, if they are not studied now, will have to be returned to later. It is therefore better to furnish the mind immediately.

It may be that you will meet with musicians who have " arrived " who will tell you with the best faith in the world: " What is the use of encumbering your mind with all those studies? Nobody ever taught me all that."

With these, bring the conversation to a point of history, adroitly lead them to give their opinion of the characteristic side of a poet, ask them for the explanation of a phenomenon in acoustics, in fact, put them under a little examination, and you will very soon acquire the conviction that if nobody has ever taught them anything it is because they have learned everything for themselves, and that they would be strong enough to convince the doctors of this.

The love of reading, the taste for literary or scientific meetings, and conversation with learned men, in their case, by the aid of a great facility of assimilation, will have taken the place of lessons and studies properly so-called. It matters little how they have learned, or whether they have learned without effort, and without even perceiving it; what is certain is that they know. You will never see a great artist an ignoramus.

But, someone will object, with such a programme of studies, in which even there has as yet been no mention of musical technique, how much time will it be necessary to devote to it? A whole lifetime would not suffice.—Yes, it would, by using method and not studying all this at once. Everything in its own time. After several years devoted to letters and to the exact sciences, one will proceed to philosophy and reading the great poets, and then the pupil, having learned to work, which is always the principal thing, may be left to himself to complete his studies by such reading as suits him, selecting it from the subjects already sketched and which have the most attractions for him, and are on that very account the ones that he has the most interest in investigating. As for travelling, it will find its place naturally during vacations.

The higher musical studies are very long, it cannot be denied, when we want to render them solid and base them on an indestructible rock: "Time respects nothing that has been made without him." (I know not from whom this thought of profound truth emanates, but J. J. Rousseau somewhat paradoxically manages

to go even farther: "The greatest fault that we can commit in education is to be in a hurry; the essential thing is not to gain time, but to lose it." We have already seen an analogous conviction expressed in more measured terms by Ernest Legouvé.) The composer cannot escape this inflexible rule, and as he cannot devote his whole time every day to music alone, which would be extravagant and would lead to a breakdown he will find a derivative and relative repose in literary labours skilfully varied.

It is even necessary for him to arrange moments of veritable recreation, play and distraction. The best games for him are those of combination, among which chess, billiards and a few others stand first; but I insist upon chess, which trains us to reflect and foresee, and the men of which, with their various moves and the illimitable resulting complications may offer interesting analogies with the games of counterpoint and the innumerable combinations to which they give rise. Also physical exercises, such as sports, horsemanship, and especially fencing, which singularly develops the spirit of appropriateness, forces us to think quickly without the aid of words, and constitutes gymnastics of the mind at the same time as the very best of the exercises of the body. In one word, put into practice the following excellent advice: "The great secret of education is to make the exercises of the body and those of the mind always serve as relaxation to one another" (J. J. Rousseau); then, as a complete stop, a simple walk in the fields, in the fresh air, in accordance with the paternal advice of that good Schumann,

whom I often quote, because he is, in my opinion, one of those who have best understood the subject that I am attempting to develop here, Musical Education, which must not be confounded with Musical Instruction, which I have treated in other works. Here is the text of this advice: "Often rest yourself from your musical studies by reading good poets. Take walks *assiduously* (I think this expression to walk assiduously absolutely charming; it so well represents the ways of the student dreamer) in the country, through the fields."

The whole thing, here as always, is to avoid fatigue, intellectual exhaustion, which we may manage so much the more easily in proportion as more variety is introduced into the studies and we do not keep constantly to the sole idea of music, always music, which must be avoided, if only for the sake of always coming back to it with new and ever greater pleasure.

And now it is no longer the pupil himself whom I am addressing but his relatives, his family and those immediately about him, and all who take any interest in him to put them on their guard against two equally dangerous rocks from which it is for them to preserve him. One is adulation and the other is indifference. The first breeds fatuity and the second entails discouragement.

It is detestable to create an atmosphere of admiration around a youthful composer and to accustom him, as is too often done, from his earliest attempts to excessive praise which he is ever ready to accept as

genuine and which intoxicates him and deceives him as to his real value, and the sad results of which are first to hinder him from working and to lay up cruel deceptions for him in the future.

It is quite as bad to show nothing but coldness and indifference to his work and what it produces, for, if he sees his friends and relations take no interest in it and pay no attention to it, how can he hope for the good will and a more sympathetic reception on the part of the strangers of whom the public is composed? I once knew a talented young man who at least possessed great facility of production which had been developed by complete studies, who, after having devoted three entire months to the composition of an important work, one evening gathered together the members of his family to give them a private hearing of it. The poor fellow had got scarcely half through it when one left the room, another went to sleep and a third took up a newspaper! He could have cried over it. The result was that he gave up composing, which is probably to be regretted.

It is necessary to know how to keep a middle course, to give evidence of interest, to show ourselves indulgent, to be always ready to listen, to give encouragement, neither to praise nor criticise unless we feel certain that we are competent in the matter, but also to avoid all enthusiasm that would not find an echo in the outside world and might lead a beginner to range himself prematurely among the misunderstood geniuses and imagine himself a victim of this art.

By the side of Genius there is Talent.

When the two are united, the artist is complete.

We must not regard talent as a diminutive of genius, that would be a very false conception. They are two things that are absolutely distinct from one another and both equally necessary to the composer, but do not resemble each other in anything.

If, as we have just said, genius is an innate faculty, a natural gift like blue eyes or black hair, talent, on the contrary, is acquired piecemeal by study and is accessible to everybody except those rare natures that are absolutely refractory to any artistic idea.

I shall make myself understood better by a comparison.

It is necessary to have some little voice in order to become a singer; but this is not enough, to learn how to sing is also necessary. The voice is the gift; to know how to sing is what is acquired. There is not the slightest advantage in having a beautiful voice unless we know how to use it; and to know how to sing is useless if we have not the voice.

Similarly, in order to become a composer we must first have some little inspiration; but that does not suffice, we must also learn how to write. Inspiration is the natural gift; to know how to write is what is acquired. There is no use in having ideas if we do not know how to take advantage of them; and there is no use in possessing talent if we have not at least a tiny grain of genius to fertilize it with.

And, pursuing our parallel, just as we should never advise anybody who has no voice to study singing,

so it is almost useless to plunge too deeply into the long and often arid studies of the composer unless we have a strong presumption that we shall find a few ideas to place at the service of our erudition.

We will not return to the elementary studies. It is thoroughly understood that before undertaking the higher studies it is necessary to have a solid foundation of *solfeggio*, to play the piano pretty well, and, above all, to be a good sight-reader and able to write with facility what we hear, since now it will be a question of writing no longer under a master's dictation, but under the dictation of our own imagination.

I do not fear insisting again here on the importance of the use of the piano, because it is for new reasons. When we are forming a composer, we must think of everything that will facilitate his career; now, the piano should hold the first place here: by its means he will manage to make his productions comprehensible to an editor, or a theatrical manager, and give him an idea of it. If he is not a sufficiently good pianist for this, he will be forced to have recourse to an interpreter, which is not at all the same thing. Everybody knows the Italian proverb: *traduttore, traditore* (translator, traitor); however able and well-intentioned he may be, a third person will never succeed in conveying the thousand shadings of detail in his work as intelligently as himself, and in giving it the desired go and colouring, and penetrating the mind of the leader of the orchestra with it. It is also a good thing to be able to accompany the singers and make them rehearse, for this is the way by which he

will best be able to train them and succeed in inculcating them with his own ideas, which could not be done by the best accompanist who is not imbued with them as he is. The piano is a power for him, a precious tool, an incomparable auxiliary, the handling of which he must acquire at the most favourable time, that is to say, in early youth. If not, he will always regret it.

"I have often missed the use of this instrument; it would have been useful to me under many circumstances," wrote Berlioz * at a period when his career had almost ended and when he had been able by cruel personal experience to learn what things are likely to aid or to hinder a composer's course.

## II. The Science of Music: Study of Harmony and Counterpoint

This small collection of preliminary knowledge constitutes what we will henceforth call being a good musician. By *solfeggio*, we possess the *Language;* by the piano, we have been able to make ourselves familiar with the *Art*. Now we are going to enter directly into the domain of *Science*.

"Do not be afraid of the words Theory, Harmony, Counterpoint, etc. If you smile at them, they will do as much for you." Again it is Schumann from whom we borrow this gracious image which is absolute truth; for if we have thought it our duty to say above that the higher musical studies are sometimes arid,

* Hector Berlioz, *Mémoires*.

this must be understood to apply only to those who are incompletely endowed. For the others, musical science is amiable and full of charm, as Montaigne seems to describe it in his picturesque language: "Science should have her abode in a fertile plain to which we gain access by sweet-scented and flowery ways of smooth and easy grade. Why set her apart on a savage rock, a phantom to terrify people?" This is particularly true for the science of harmony, "that divine art that all great minds have loved; perhaps the only one that we may hope to find in the better world that is promised to us." *

The study of harmony teaches you that precious thing, *probity of writing;* and with it, grace, elegance, distinction, and especially clearness of ideas. Without it, the style is awkward, heavy, and full of useless incumbrances and superfluities; moreover, it is this that teaches us the art of rich, entrancing, or suave sonorities, happy modulations coming sensibly and appropriately, true equilibrium and learned proportions to be given to the tonal edifice; also the art of writing for the voice, handling it skilfully and obtaining from it all the effect it is capable of yielding.

The traces of it last through the entire life of the composer, especially if he has studied under the direction of a learned and experienced master; and all his works to their smallest details will show its influence—so much so, that on examining a single page of any writer whatsoever, a true artist can judge immedi-

* François Bazin, *Traité d'Harmonie* (Preface).

ately whether his studies have been carried far or merely sketched.

Harmony is the chief of the composer's studies. By this I mean that if any one of them had to be neglected, which would always be infinitely to be regretted, it should not be this one on any account whatsoever.

This study cannot be completed in a week; on the contrary, it gains by being conducted tranquilly, restfully, and reflectively; for the pupil ought to store his mind with a number of rules and no less numerous exceptions without memory coming into play at all, or very little. What is essential is to gain a full comprehension of the value of these rules and exceptions, to grasp the reason for the existence of each and thoroughly to understand their utility. Then we find ourselves in possession of resources at which we ourselves are astonished, for nothing beforehand, and particularly early in the study, could have made us suspect their existence.

It is quite understood that these writing studies, as well as those of counterpoint, of which we shall speak a little later, must be done at the table, without the aid of the piano or other instrument, so as to accustom ourselves to hear mentally with absolute precision. If at first this is troublesome, it will not be for long, and we shall be well recompensed later.

Above all, we must not forget that nothing is to be gained by going quickly, and be on our guard against professors who pretend that they will teach us harmony in twenty lessons. It is necessary for

us to reckon on about two years for merely learning the rules and knowing how to apply them (for here we must never separate practice and theory). Then remains for us to acquire manual dexterity, touch, the real talent of the harmonist, which takes at least an equal length of time.

We must not be afraid of this slowness, which is more apparent than real, however strange that may appear, for on one hand, when once the harmony studies are ended half of the whole distance will have been covered, and, on the other hand, by means of a certain dovetailing of the studies which I will explain a little later, we find ourselves able to save a considerable amount of the total time.

The average age at which it seems to me most desirable to undertake the study of harmony is about 15 or 16 years. Here it is no longer as with *solfeggio* (the Language) that is never learned better than intuitively. We have now reached Science, and a certain degree of maturity of mind is indispensable, so that to begin earlier seems to me to be useless and, perhaps even hurtful, as mentally fatiguing except in certain exceptional cases, for there is nothing absolute in this. But on the other hand, he who in a desired time has acquired the primary knowledge and has preserved a very precise memory of it may devote himself to harmony at no matter what age, since reasoning is everything here. Perhaps even (I have never made the experiment) anyone whose mind has already been disciplined for the work by some other study demanding close application, such for instance as mathematics,

might succeed in assimilating the precepts of harmony in a shorter period than is generally necessary.

The amount of time to be devoted to harmony is one or two hours a day at the beginning, gradually increasing this up to four hours. More would be useless. Moreover, this time must be divided so as never to keep the mind intent on the same subject for more than two consecutive hours.

To these four hours of harmony, add two hours of piano, four hours of literary or scientific study, making ten hours of work, reserve two hours for meals and the unforeseen, two hours more for walking or physical exercise, a total of fourteen hours; there is a well-balanced day leaving still about ten hours for sleep, which is more than is necessary even in youth.

Approximately this is how I would distribute these hours through the day, so as to get the greatest possible profit:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Morning: | 8 to 9 | Harmony |
| | 9 to 11 | Scientific studies |
| | 11 to noon | Piano |
| Afternoon: | 1 to 2 | Rest or exercise |
| | 2 to 3 | Harmony |
| | 3 to 5 | Literary studies |
| | 5 to 6 | Harmony |
| | 6 to 7 | Piano |
| Evening: | 8 to 9 | Rest or exercise |
| | 9 to 10 | Harmony |

In this manner, fatigue will be reduced to a *minimum* by the variety introduced into the diverse con-

secutive studies. For harmony, which is the principal thing for the moment, I reserve the best places: the morning on getting up, then after exercise, when the mind is refreshed and the ideas fresh, then in the evening before going to bed, which prepares the work for the following morning and renders it easier. The hours of recreation are arranged just after those of repose, which conforms to the principles of hygiene; moreover, they are those in which intellectual work is at once more laborious and less profitable.

Twice a week, one of the hours devoted to harmony should be occupied by the lesson (two lessons are sufficient); once a week, one of the hours of piano study should likewise have a piano lesson substituted; if with this, the professor of literature could be induced to come to talk with his pupil once or twice a week in the hours reserved for literature and science, that would be perfect; there would be neither fatigue nor lost time, and the work thus regulated would be agreeable and productive at the same time.

I have presented this little model of the employment of time so as to reply in advance to the objections that might arise as to the difficulty of learning so many things at the same time. Many more are learned in the *Lycées*, because there, the employment of each hour is strictly fixed.

We must know how to make our own personal regulation; and once made, to become its slave.

We may vary the exercises of written harmony, which is the basis of the instruction, with those of harmony applied to the piano, and this is an excellent

thing. These practical exercises are: 1. Playing on the piano the Figured Bass, such as was used by the composers of the Sixteenth Century, and which was still employed by Rossini in the recitatives of all his works in Italian. 2. The accompaniment of a song, or any melody which is presented devoid of any indication. 3. The reading and translation to the piano of the orchestral score, which is of the highest interest. All this should be done at sight, without preparation of any kind, and under the attentive eye of an excellent master, an indispensable matter. Under these conditions, this accustoms one to think quickly, and to apply the rules of harmony without hesitation, and it is an excellent preparation for the study of improvization.

During the whole time of the harmony studies, as all those that follow them, it is indispensable to hear a great deal of music of every school, but especially the best possible, and preferably by the classic writers:—grand symphony concerts, chamber-music, recitals by great *virtuosi* or great singers, organ recitals, choral renderings, all these are also subjects of study for the harmony student. But we must not go to hear all this passively for the mere sensual pleasure of the ear, we must force ourselves to bring to these hearings a little of the spirit of analysis that will later form the principal element in the studies of pure composition; that is to say that we must not listen to a single piece without trying to recognize in what key it is written, the time (we have the right to look at the conductor), and the principal modulations. All this can be noted

down rapidly on a little pad carried for the purpose that can afterwards be submitted to the professor for the sake of being sure that we have heard and understood correctly.

To catch the key in which an orchestral piece or chamber-music begins, we have only to listen attentively to the musicians while they are tuning up, and thus get the *A* with them. If we do not succeed in this way, it is because our ear is not yet sufficiently trained and then we must courageously set ourselves again to the exercises of dictation.* A few rare individuals enjoy a very singular faculty, a sort of indefinitely prolonged and constant memory of sound in its absolute degree of height in correlation with the name that is given to it, they have the *A* of the diapason (an essentially conventional thing) or any other note as though indelibly engraved on their ear, and, consequently, without any kind of aid, they can discern the exact key of everything that they hear. At any hour of the day or night, on their return from a long journey on which they have not heard a note of music, or on recovery from a long illness, they can give the *A* to an orchestra with certainty, and they never make a mistake; they have the diapason in their ear, or better still, they are living diapasons. I have known several without taking count of them, and I have been able to convince myself that this strange disposition constitutes only a negative quality that leads to nothing and is useless. Neither Rossini, nor Gounod, nor Ambroise Thomas, nor other great composers with

* See page 26.

whom I have often talked about it possessed it in the slightest degree. It appears to me indubitable, however, that this faculty is connected only with an ear that is perfectly true in what concerns the relations of sounds to one another, a matter that is indispensable.

Let us return.—Another way of hearing a concert intelligently is to procure beforehand the score of what is going to be played, decipher it at home, carry it to the concert, follow it attentively and play it over again on returning home. The same thing should be done for the concerts of Chamber-music. For all the classic quartets, there exist little diamond editions that are easy to put in the pocket, which double the pleasure of listening for those who know how to read well. For the classic symphonies of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Mendelssohn, the orchestral score must also be procured so as to learn how to discern the *timbre* of each instrument (again a little piece of good advice by Schumann: "Penetrate early into the tone and character of every instrument and accustom your ear to distinguish its individual colouring." Notice carefully that he says: *early*);—this will be exceedingly valuable later when we shall occupy ourselves with Orchestration.

Employed in this manner, the two hours' duration of a concert will afford more instruction than any other lesson whatsoever.

Less useful for the moment are theatrical performances, which, however, must not be entirely neglected, but during which the mind is too much occupied with

other things to be able to attend to those details of purely musical analysis. Their turn will come in their proper time.

The moment has now arrived to explain the overlapping of studies, of which I have already said a few words.

When we begin the study of Harmony, it is well to continue that of *solfeggio*, at least for a certain time, since we have established that it could never be pushed too far nor prolonged too much. Similarly, when we have attained a certain skill in writing by the study of Harmony, we can without inconvenience undertake that of Counterpoint conjointly, but in small doses.

It is difficult to settle the opportune moment, for it depends altogether on the personality of the pupil, his character and temperament. The teacher, who alone can judge of this, is alone capable of determining. In short, it is the moment when the pupil, having now for several months known the whole of the principles, is beginning to know how to apply them judiciously, with facility and elegance to those school exercises known by the name of *given themes* and *given basses*, whatever their style may be, either of classic or modern form. To begin Counterpoint earlier than that would be a fault, and for this reason: its rules, while they are not the same as those of Harmony, which are derived from it, present numerous analogies, nevertheless; and if we begin to study it before the former have had time to fix themselves indelibly in the mind, we run a great risk of confusion arising between the

two, rendering them both unintelligible, or depriving them of the precision that constitutes their force, to the great prejudice of the pupil's progress, who will simply get confused. It therefore belongs to the professor alone to assume such a responsibility, I repeat, because the pupil cannot be the judge of this question; he is not sufficiently favourably situated to see for himself.

But when this double study is undertaken at the proper time, Counterpoint, on the contrary, becomes a precious and incomparable auxiliary for the completion of the higher studies of Harmony. We shall understand this immediately.

The two following comparisons have often been made: "Counterpoint, in relation to Harmony, is what Syntax is to Grammar," or "Counterpoint is to Harmony as Algebra is to Arithmetic." Both are false, for Syntax would be of no use at all unless we first knew Grammar, and Algebra, with its formulæ and equations, would be helpless without the assistance of Arithmetic to solve them, whilst Counterpoint forms a complete whole in itself and we can learn it quite well without knowing a word of Harmony, as is often done in Germany and as was necessarily done everywhere before the harmonic theories were established and spread, and before they existed even in germ. I infinitely prefer this third comparison which possesses the advantage of an indisputable historic truth: "*Counterpoint is a dead musical language which has given birth to the living musical language of the present day.*"

The musicians of to-day, therefore, have the same interest in learning Counterpoint as the French, Italians and Spanish, people of Latin origin, have in learning Latin. They will never so well comprehend the genius of their own tongue, nor ever speak and write it so purely as when they have studied their mother tongue. This it is wherein lies its veritable utility for every composer who has the ambition to write works of an elevated character and of solid construction.

We cannot form an absolutely exact idea of what Counterpoint is without having practised it to some extent ourselves; nevertheless, I wanted my readers to know the truth about it. That is why I ask to be allowed to make another comparison which perhaps will be better understood by some people, particularly those who cultivate the arts of design: "*Counterpoint is in music what the manner of the primitive masters is in painting.*" The great and admirable works written in the pure style of counterpoint by Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, Arcadelt, Clement Jannequin, Vittoria, Allegri, and other of their contemporaries have something of the simplicity, stiffness and awkwardness in their manner, but also the sincerity and profound conviction of the admirable paintings of the primitive Italians, Cimabue, Giotto, and the first of the great painters of the Italian Renaissance, Ghirlandajo, Lippi and Botticelli, etc., which are so delightfully interesting and attractive to study when one can do so at leisure in the museums of Florence. Like these also, their subjects are almost always re-

ligious texts, conceived and interpreted in the Mediæval manner.

"At the beginning of the German school," says Théophile Gautier, "we find the handling dry, laboured, minute and hieratic, so to speak, which is common to all the primitive artists." A musician could not have expressed himself in truer terms.

The robust and ingenious art of the early masters is dead, just as the contrapuntal style is; but both have given birth to other artistic manifestations, which could not have existed without them and their fertile gropings, and in the course of years produced geniuses like Michelangelo, Titian, Lionardo da Vinci, Raphael, Paul Veronese, Rubens, Velasquez, Sebastian Bach, Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini, Berlioz, Wagner and the great modern masters, thus leaving the imperishable traces behind them.

That is what Counterpoint is.

From the technical point of view, the great difference that exists between it and the harmonic theory is that the latter is based upon the existence of fully constituted *chords* and the combinations that they can form among themselves; whilst Counterpoint, starting from a more rudimentary point, considers all the arrangements that can be brought into existence by *notes* simultaneously grouped two by two, three by three, etc., and it is from this that it takes its name, *punctum contra punctum*, point against point, the word *point* being taken here in the sense of *note*.

For the harmonist, the chief thing is the chord; for the contrapuntist, it is the note. To tell the truth,

Counterpoint is the oldest and most venerable of the system of Harmony, and Harmony is nothing but modernized Counterpoint. Everybody who tries to make two notes go together, or sketches the slightest fragment of accompaniment to a song, is making counterpoint unknown to himself, just as M. Jourdain made prose; so there is no need to be greatly frightened about it.

Counterpoint rejects constructed or *arpeggio* chords; regular and rigorously symmetrical formulæ seem flat and uninteresting and stupid to it; above all, it likes the independent march of the parts and takes pleasure in ingenuities which it sometimes even pushes to the verge of puerility or Chinese ornaments; for ever and ever it demands variety, as in Gothic architecture, in which not one capital, not one ornamental detail, nor a window-frame is repeated, and this variety must not injure the unity. It also constantly requires invention, fresh designs and new riches, voices that seem to question and answer each other wittily, pursue, overlap and get entangled without ever returning a second time into absolutely identical combinations, such is the very essence of Counterpoint, the highest expression and the most perfect form of which is the *Fugue*, as understood by Sebastian Bach, who marked the culminating point of that epoch.

All the studies of Counterpoint converge towards this sole goal: to succeed in writing the *Fugue* correctly. "Therefore there can be no better study for a young composer. He will thereby learn to present

and develop his ideas with power, flexibility and ingenuity." * It is by the study of Counterpoint that we learn to know the most learned musical combinations, as well as the art of getting the greatest possible advantage from an idea, or a motive, that here takes the name *Subject*. It is in the Fugue more than anywhere else that we find the model of good order and equilibrium for all the parts of a musical composition of whatsoever dimensions and whatever may be the style in which it is conceived, even the most modern and most advanced style. Very foolish or ignorant are those then who think that all these rules and all these principles are of a nature to shackle genius; they may dam it however, which is quite another matter. It should be sufficient for them to know that all the most celebrated composers who are the objects of their admiration were and still are strong contrapuntists, as well as skilful harmonists. Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, César Franck, Richard Wagner, Massenet and Saint-Saëns, to mention only a few, have strongly impregnated and nourished their minds with these solid and retrospective studies of which all their works bear the masterly imprint, which has not in the least hindered them from preserving and loudly asserting their own personality, and from going forward.

Has any one ever thought of pretending that the study of Greek or Latin literature, the reading of Sophocles, Æschylus, Euripides, Horace, or Virgil is likely to be prejudicial to the originality of young

* Th. Dubois, *Traité de contrepoint et fugue.*

writers, be they poets, prose-writers, or dramatic authors? This would be neither more nor less absurd, it would be the same thing. It would be attributing to ignorance a virtue that it does not possess, and putting a premium on laziness and heedlessness.

And unfortunately, this idea is very prevalent in the amateur world; they think that as soon as they have ideas they have only to take a pen and put them down on paper without taking any notice of what those who went before them did.

With my own ears, I have heard a young society composer utter this delightful table-talk: "Why, they would pay me to write Bach: but that I would not do!" I have also heard a young painter who had lived in Rome for several months boast loudly that he had never set his foot in a museum. They were two imbeciles.

Far from this, we should know our classics to the bottom, admire all that is admirable in them, set ourselves to penetrate profoundly into their genius and their proceedings, their composition, and never fear that this knowledge will incite us to anything more than this: the desire to become a creator like them, which is perhaps the best way to stimulate the blossoming of ideas, and to induce and excite the secretion of thought. "The influence of the masters is a veritable paternity: to want to do without them is as sensible as it would be to pretend to be a father without having been a son." *

In the same order of ideas, we will say on this point

* Gounod, *Étude sur les chorals de Bach.*

of the higher studies that even more energetically than in the past the obligation is imposed to hear a great deal of music of all styles, the religious style, (Catholic religious art has produced marvels, that are *infinitely* too greatly neglected in our day), the symphonic style, the dramatic style, the music of all ages, modern as well as classic, for one ought to neglect nothing. " If there were only one school and one doctrine in art, art would very quickly perish for lack of boldnesses and new attempts." * Therefore, we must frequent the churches, concerts and theatres where there is music. When we go to the theatre, especially to hear a work that we do not yet know, we must first have read the entire score, preferably at the table, if we have arrived at that degree of perfection which consists in hearing with our eyes (" You must render yourself capable of reading any music and comprehending it by sight alone " †),— otherwise at the piano, if it suits you better and if you play that instrument well, by taking note of the passages to which you think you will want to pay special attention when you hear it given, either by reason of their special beauty that delights you, or on the other hand because you feel that you do not understand them, on account of appearing confused or obscure to you. Then, take the score with you to the performance, and courageously follow the execution line by line even if that should cause you to be regarded as a " poser " by those in the next seats. Be particular for the moment carefully to observe the

* George Sand. † Schumann.

great features of the composition, the division of the work into parts, the structure of these parts, the division of the work by scenes according to the more modern form that tends at present, perhaps a little too much, to become generalized; pay attention also to the manner of treating the voices, in the *solos* as well as in the ensembles and choruses; to the *rôle* of the orchestra, the concordance between the dramatic action and the musical text, the good prosody and the lyrical declamation. In fact, proceed as if you had been commissioned to write a critical and analytical account of the work, nevertheless forcing yourself to take note of the interpretation and the value of the interpreters, setting beside them the ideal of the interpreters and interpretation dreamed of by the composer. In this manner, you will succeed in forming your judgment and having the right to assert admirations and preferences based on something more than the fashion, or public snobbery. At a second hearing, if you are convinced that you have thoroughly penetrated the intent of the composer and his proceedings, it will be better to go to the theatre without the score and let the action work upon you. After analysis, emotion.—Some people may extol the inverse order: to submit themselves to the emotion first and seek its causes afterwards. It is perhaps a matter of temperament; you can try it. I prefer to proceed as I have said, because in the Lyrical Drama, or the Opera, or even the Opéra Comique, it is not the same as in the Operetta or Fairy Opera, where surprise and the unexpected play an important part. A

great musical work that is truly beautiful produces as great an impression at the second hearing as at the first, sometimes greater (this is even a mark of true masterpieces), and consequently this element of the unforeseen need not be taken into account for its sound appreciation, and for so much the more reason in the case, analysis for the sake of study, of which we are speaking here.

Those who are hardest to please will agree that our plan of composition studies, if for a moment it has seemed to them to be more extensive than they anticipated, is not really too burdensome, and permits of some pleasant moment, for, after all's said and done, the obligation of often going to the theatre or concert, even with the means of taking interest in it more intelligently than the ordinary run of mortals, would make many students envious, whatever their branch of study might be, and would not strike anybody as a very cruel compulsion.

It is the same with a little erudition that is as easy as necessary to acquire, being complementary to these instructive attendances, this is that of the *History of Music*. To hear a composer without knowing at what epoch he lived, or what kind of man he was, or to what school he belonged, or what are his principal productions is to expose ourselves to deplorable contempt, ridiculous even with respect to ourselves, and of a nature to warp all equitable judgment.

Now, in a few evenings devoted to reading several well-written works on this subject, a few memoirs, or collected biographies of celebrated artists, we shall

quickly come to possess this knowledge, or complete it, if already in prior studies we have had the opportunity to dip into it. I intentionally said *several* works instead of *one* work, because in the majority of cases they are blemished with partiality or inexactnesses, and they will serve to correct one another if we read several.

### III. Orchestration and Instrumentation

Now I want to speak of an entirely different kind of study which also is full of attraction, because it is by its very nature exceedingly varied and because it is only superficial, unlike all those of which we have had to speak hitherto; also because it is a preparatory step towards the most seductive study of all, Orchestration, whose turn will soon come. It is the question of acquiring a simply summary knowledge of the management of one of the instruments belonging to each of the three principal groups of the orchestra: strings, wood and brass. He who, during the time that his studies of Harmony, Counterpoint and Fugue last, manages to spare *one hour* a day to study a stringed instrument the first year, a wood-wind instrument the second year, and a brass instrument the third year, even though he totally abandons them one after the other, will have scarcely anything more to learn in the matter of instrumentation. By this simple course, he will have acquired an incomparable mastery, for, by each instrument that he will have thus practised, he will have quite a sufficient knowledge of others of the same family; and, by the union of the

three, the whole orchestra. And, I repeat, one hour a day for three years is sufficient for the realization of this ideal, which seems prodigious: the possession of complete knowledge of all the organs of the orchestra.

One instrument or another, it appears to me a matter of indifference which, should be chosen from each group; however, in preference, I should take the Violoncello, the Clarinet and the Horn. The Violoncello, because it seems to me a little less irritating to the nerves during the first months of study, in which we necessarily play somewhat out of tune; the Clarinet, because of its diverse registers so clearly cut; the Horn, because incontestably it is the noblest of the family, and also because of the stopped tones that are peculiar to it. If it is easier to find teachers for the violin, flute and trumpet, I see no great objection in that, but the neighbours will be somewhat more to be pitied.

It is necessary that the teacher should fully understand what we want, and that he should give his lessons quite differently from the way he would if it were a matter of forming a *virtuoso;* that what is demanded of him is much less learning to play the instrument than explaining how it is played; and especially keep in mind that by reason of the general programme of studies that we have adopted, we cannot devote more than about a year to it.

In one year of the violin or violoncello, a pupil of open intelligence may easily gain a knowledge of the following: the fingering of the scales and usual arpeggios, of double chords, triple and quadruple

chords, the manner of producing the natural and artificial harmonics, and above all, which is of the most importance, the various effects that result from the variety of bowing. He will execute all this clumsily and awkwardly, but that matters little, he will know how to distinguish between what is possible, easy, difficult and impossible; that is all that he needs. In a year of the clarinet, he will be able to know the *embouchure*, the tablature and the various fingering of all the notes, the *timbre* of the three registers, and the most familiar features.—In a year of the French horn, he will know how the natural and stopped tones are produced, and here again if he succeeds only in sounding them with difficulty, taking lots of time for it, he will be able to form an exact idea of the working of the brass instruments, and what can be demanded of them. A few lessons may be devoted to the valve horn, to complement this.

All this can be easily done during the course of the Counterpoint and Fugue studies, for they are not so pleasing as that of Harmony; instead of four hours, two will suffice when well employed; here especially it is advisable to apply the Latin adage: *Festina lente*, make haste slowly.

Therefore, one of the two hours taken from the writing work may be utilized for this summary study of the instruments. One is left over; what shall we do with it? Employ it in the way that is the most interesting to him who is already initiated into the history of music by his reading. Take any author whatsoever, according to our own individual sympa-

thies, and decipher all his works that we can procure, chronologically, beginning with the first, so as to follow him step by step and see him develop as we are trying to develop ourselves. After him, take another and then another, as many as are desired, at the same time, if possible, reading their biographies again (there are some who have left autobiographies, or memoirs), and trying to become thoroughly acquainted with the epoch at which such or such a work was written, and under what influence, etc.

Here, as everywhere, the study of the great classics is always the best and most important, and should come first; but that does not mean to say that we should neglect the moderns and our contemporaries; that would be a grave fault, a veritable gap in our education. In the material impossibility, for lack of time, of studying them all one after the other, it is better to select a few, those towards whom we are most strongly attracted, and make their intimate acquaintance, rather than to scatter our forces by fluttering through a large number.

(In order really to have an intimate and complete knowledge of a composer, we must read him through three times with constantly sustained attention: the first time, from end to end in the order in which the works were produced; the second, by categories: symphonic, theatrical, religious, vocal and instrumental,—still chronologically in each category; the third time, paying attention only to the culminating points and the great masterpieces, and submitting them to profound study.

If we wanted to apply such a process of investigation to Bach, Haydn, or Beethoven, it would absorb a man's lifetime. We indicate without advising it, for it would indeed be too absorbing, and only for the reason of showing how less profound studies may be conducted, while keeping the same methodical principle as a base, or attacking less prolific producers.

By this, we especially mean to say that no one can truly feel convinced that he knows a man of genius to the depths unless he has followed the march of his development and studied his masterpieces down to their smallest details.)

It is by reading much good music in this way and by bringing the spirit of analysis and observation to this reading, that we most surely come to be imbued with the importance of *form*, as well as to know the musical *forms*, the *scope* and the normal *proportions* to give to a work of any kind whatsoever, as they have been established by the great classic or romantic masters, either by the aid of long gropings, or the powerful deductions of their logical genius. It will be observed that these forms, which vary within wide limits according to the periods, schools and styles, and also in accordance with the fancy of each composer, which never loses its rights, all have a firm, fixed and immutable course, which is characteristic of them, and, together with this, a suppleness and elasticity in their proportions that relieve them of all pedagogic rigidity and give free rein to the imagination.

The art of form, which is of considerable im-

portance with regard to composition, is the art of harmonious proportions, it is the *harmony of form* as understood in architecture.

Its importance makes itself felt in every detail as in the whole, from the structure of a simple motive to the largest divisions of a long-winded work. "It is not a composer's caprice that has established the different forms and æsthetic exigencies: thus it is that you cannot change the forms of the Sonata without making it simply a thing of fancy,—something that will be neither a Symphony, a Sonata, nor a Concerto. In its elementary laws, architecture is the art that approaches most closely to music. Can anybody represent to himself a house, a church, or any edifice whatever without a fixed form? Can anyone imagine an edifice the façade of which would be that of a church, the other face that of a pavilion, and the sides those of a railway station and a factory?" *

A musical work can no more do without logical dimension and equilibrium than a speech or a poetical work can. The poets have their forms: the Sonnet, Madrigal, Ballade, Ode, Meditation, Stanzas, Strophes, Couplets, etc., are also poetical forms. Musicians also have theirs, a complete list of which we have no room to enumerate here, but in which we recognize as principal and typical: Melody, Romance, Air, Glee, Lied, Chanson, Canzonetta, Recitative, Fugue, Symphony, Sonata, Concerto (these last three are closely related), Overture, Marches of various characters, Dance or Ballet airs, etc. Without form,

* A. Rubinstein, *La musique et ses représentants.*

the work lacks homogeneity; genius must learn to submit to it; it is the duty of talent to use its restraint, at the same time introducing the other indispensable element, variety.

"Variety in unity" is the formula of the work of art, whatever it may be; now, unity cannot be obtained without respect for form, which is not a constraint, but a support of the idea:

"It is nothing without the mind, it is everything with the idea." *

Form is the scaffolding, the skeleton, of all musical construction; if we do not see it, we must feel it, as we feel the anatomy in painting and sculpture, the body beneath the folds of the vesture, and the skeleton under the flesh. Those musicians who treat this branch of their studies lightly never produce anything but desultory works, disconnected, vague, forceless, lacking in cohesion and good form.

When we have successfully carried through all these studies, that are so truly attractive and full of variety, the rhetoric and philosophy of music, we may begin to recognize in ourselves a certain amount of erudition, to be conscious that we know something, which is far from unpleasant.

Now then, when the time has arrived when we are capable of writing a Fugue in four parts in a satisfactory manner, we may, while still continuing to practise this admirable exercise, begin to occupy ourselves a little with Instrumentation and Orchestration,

* Victor Hugo.

which constitutes a fresh interlacing of the studies, and consequently enables us to gain time.

To a large extent, the two words Instrumentation and Orchestration are synonymous. There is a shade of difference, however. Properly speaking, Instrumentation is the personal knowledge of each instrument considered individually, that is to say, of all that we can reasonably ask of it and of all the effects that we can obtain from it. Orchestration is the art of grouping them, playing with them, obtaining *timbres* of infinite variety from their inexhaustible combinations, and mixing them with one another as a painter mixes the colours of his palette.

Instrumentation is a science; Orchestration is an art.

How do we learn Instrumentation? First, from the special treatises; next, by reading methods of instruments, above all by having a finger in the pie and trying to play some of them; largely also by reading things that are well written and observing how those masters who are most learned in the matter have treated each member of the orchestra, the specific efforts that they have demanded of it, and the form and nature of the features that are easiest or most familiar to it. Like all other sciences, it is acquired by reading, observation and experiment.

How do we learn Orchestration? By orchestrating.

"The orchestration of a piece of music is like the painting of a picture; the combination of the instruments is like the mixing of colours according to the

tint we wish to obtain. Moreover, there is also light and shadow in instrumentation." *

The simplest exercise consists in taking a good arrangement for the piano, for two or four hands, of an Overture or part of Symphony, go and hear it given by an orchestra, swiftly noting as well as we can with eyes as well as ears to which instrument the composer has confided such and such a passage, song phrase, feature, etc., and afterwards try to re-orchestrate the same piece in the same way. When this work is finished and we confront it with the original score, we shall be prodigiously astonished. It will scarcely resemble it at all. Then, by comparing the two texts, that of the composer and our own, note by note, part by part, seeking in all the smallest details the cause of the superiority of one over the other (note that I have the politeness not to say which), we shall be giving ourselves the best and most profitable lesson possible in Orchestration.

After having repeated this experiment several times, and having attained an almost satisfactory reconstruction of it, we may, indeed we ought to, increase the difficulty by not hearing it before the orchestra plays it, and, with no other guide than the musical sentiment, try to divine the *timbres* that the author must have desired. And we shall always compare it with the score afterwards.

The inverse exercise may also be recommended: that is to take an orchestral score and make a faithful and respectful transcription of it for the piano, for

* Rubinstein.

two or four hands, or for two pianos, or even for a small number of instruments selected for this purpose. This work of transcription, that is analogous to that of an engraver reproducing a picture, who, being unable to render the colours, nevertheless causes the gradations of tint to be divined by relative values, obliges the pupil to delve to the depths of the orchestration, no detail of which can escape him. This is therefore very instructive.

This is one of the rare branches of musical knowledge that we can study alone, by observation and comparison. If, however, we can have the advice of a talented composer, expert in the matter, this does not stand in the way of our taking advantage of it with the greatest eagerness.

Treatises of Orchestration also exist, and we ought to read them so much the more since they are almost all written by men of indisputable ability. In them we shall learn the theory of Orchestration and see the processes employed by the masters analyzed and explained; and this reading will complete the instruction already acquired by frequent symphonic concerts, etc. It is now more than ever that we must not go to the concert without being provided with as many scores as we can carry with the aid of a few devoted friends; for now that we have submitted to all the initiations, there is no reason that anything should remain hidden from us. And if we understand everything, everything becomes a subject of study.

The ideal lesson for this art that is so subtle and so delicate, the veritable musical colouring, would be to

hear our own essays in a concert hall, so as to judge of the effect for ourselves, just as the painter steps back to examine his painting. Some very rich amateurs, or a few rare young artists whose friends supply them with the services of the leader of an orchestra, alone can afford this Oriental luxury or obtain such a favour at rare intervals: the palette of living colours, which a symphonic orchestra is, cannot be procured cheap. Nevertheless, we manage to orchestrate fairly well even if not learnedly and with all the delicacy desirable, by the spirit of observation and being present not only at performances, but perhaps still more even at partial rehearsals, where an able leader makes the various groups play separately before uniting them, thus dissecting the score, so to speak. For the sake of gaining practice, it is even more advantageous to go personally into the orchestra and form a part of it. It is rare that a musician of the orchestra who does not consider his functions too much in the light of a business does not, by simple routine, become capable himself of orchestrating in a perfectly logical manner. So if we have sufficient grasp of the mechanism of an instrument, we may consider it very instructive to take a part, even if it is only as a supernumerary amateur, in a good concert or theatre orchestra. There we shall even learn secrets, feats and *tricks*, that neither treatises nor professors can teach; and if some day we ourselves are called to lead an orchestra, we shall highly appreciate having learned to obey before having to command.

To play the kettle-drum really well requires a consummate musician, as do all the instruments of the *battery* (this is the name given to the group of percussion instruments: *timbales*, big drums, cymbals, triangles and other drums), by reason of the responsibility incumbent upon them. A drum-beat given out of place may throw the entire orchestra into confusion. All these percussion instruments may be learned in the space of a few days or a few minutes, so if we are not sufficiently skilful on the violin or oboe, we can always solicit one of these posts of confidence, we are sure to find our candidature well received by any orchestral leader if we present ourselves to him as a harmonist or fuguist. I should astonish many people by citing here all the great composers who for many years have held the posts of drummers in the great theatres of Paris and in the *Société des Concerts* alone, and have owed partly to this the development of their talents in the art of Instrumentation and Orchestration. It is also by participating in symphonic performances that we best learn the art of directing, communicating our will, and making ourselves understood by almost imperceptible gestures. A case may happen when a leader, either to go to the back of the hall to judge of an effect, or to make separate groups rehearse separately, will be disposed to yield his *bâton* for a moment to a member of the orchestra whom he considers a solid musician. Such opportunities should be seized with the greatest eagerness, as also others of directing private rehearsals of amateur choirs or little orches-

tras. In a word, never allow an opportunity to escape of having a finger in the pie, and being an active musician in some way or other.

"And how about composition?" I shall be asked, "it has not yet entered into discussion. When shall we speak about it?"

We shall never speak of it, with your kind permission, because it would be absolutely useless after what we have said.

If he who, according to our advice, has gone through solid literary, scientific and philosophical studies, has devoted himself to the serious reading of poets and prose writers, has frequented the museums, learning there to admire painters, sculptors and architects, has lived in an intellectual and artistic atmosphere, has travelled, seen and studied the beauties of nature and the civilization of various countries, has studied history, mythology, a little Latin, acoustics and the history of music, has pushed to the utmost his studies of *solfeggio*, piano, harmony, counterpoint, fugue, score-reading, musical analysis and orchestration, has dipped into those of the violoncello, clarinet and horn, has intelligently attended lots of concerts and lyric and dramatic theatrical performances, has been nourished with the sap of the masters,—I say if he is not yet ripe for composing, it is because he really lacks the aptitude, and he will do well to renounce it. But then what is he going to do in that quandary?

He will not be in that condition, and there is no

need to fear it. On the contrary, this is what is very likely to have happened, without my having had, or anybody else, any need to advise him: Almost at the beginning of his studies, if not before, the youth will have caught the *plague* of composition, and will have composed, perhaps even in secret if he is of a timid nature, or he will have shown his attempts to his masters, in which he will have been quite right. In fact, these first attempts, whatever they may be, should always be encouraged, on condition that they consist only of short pieces, of such importance as a Minuet, a Song without Words, or a little melody on a poetic text, and that they do not encroach upon the time normally devoted to his studies, which must come before everything.

More than this, these essays must be dated and preserved so that they may serve as a type for comparison later on so as to show his progress and intellectual development. And he must continue thus throughout his labours in Harmony, Fugue and Orchestration, producing little short and unpretentious pieces, as many as he likes, provided this does not interfere in the least with his regular daily studies, and does not take him away from them for a moment.

We may thus take the first eight or ten bars of some work of a master and exercise ourselves in developing them and altering their character while preserving as far as possible throughout the piece, the style and go of the opening. This is a very fine exercise, both amusing and instructive, and one that may be varied in many ways that are easy to imagine.

Then at length, a moment will arrive when, having acquired his whole outfit piece by piece, having, moreover, learned by assiduously reading the great masters, the form and structure of a Sonata, a Symphony, or an Oratorio, which are classical forms, also the more modern forms of the Opera, the Lyrical Tragedy and the Symphonic Poem, he will feel himself armed for dashing into the domain of grand composition and there fly with his own wings, inventing in his turn. On that thrice happy day, Composition will become his one and only study, in which all the others will be merged, as well as all the annex species of knowledge so laboriously but how pleasantly acquired. There will no longer be any reasons for limiting himself to little works of trifling expanse, on the contrary, he will be able to enlarge his frame day to day, give way to his inspiration (always assuming that he has one) and to all his caprices, being certain that the talent is there to maintain it, if necessary in its wanderings and illicit overflowings, and to make it return to the right road by talking to it in the language of reason. He will have that happy feeling that he has acquired the mastery of his art, that he has penetrated all its processes, that none of its secrets is hidden from him, and that now every audacity is allowed him. With this sentiment, another will mingle, another no less noble, still more elevated and above all more fertile, which is that *when we know all we know nothing yet*, that all this is only a preamble, and that it is only beginning with the day when all the materials are collected at the base of the work,

classified, numbered and ticketed, that the edifice commences to rise from the ground.

It is here then that the real studies of the composer begin, since henceforward he has under his hand everything that he requires in order to become his own and sole master. Henceforth, it belongs to him alone to decide how he shall train the branches of the tree the roots of which we have assisted him to plant solidly, to choose the school under whose banner he will be glad to range himself (for he must always belong to one school, or at least attach himself to one before thinking of becoming the head of a school of his own), to judge which of the bases of his erudition are those that lack solidity and that it is desirable to strengthen or to select as a foundation.

Like a veritable Wandering Jew, he will always have to march onwards to the knowledge of the Beautiful, ever to study and ever to seek. But the conditions are changed, and it will be hardly possible any longer for him to assign a precise and invariable hour every day for every kind of work as formerly. The idea is capricious, we must take it when it is willing to come. One day, we shall not do anything; the next, we shall work every hour. We shall have long periods without the shadow of an inspiration; and then suddenly our ideas will be in a state of ebullition. This, at least, is what we have always heard people say!

## IV. Habits of Great Composers

Certainly there is a portion of truth in this: a man is not equally disposed to compose at all times; but it is wholly and rigorously true only for lazy and listless minds; the others know how to help themselves, to solicit Inspiration and force her to collaborate with them when it pleases them. Ah! upon my word, when we hold her, the vixen, we must not let her escape; we must seize her by the hair, shut ourselves in with her, refuse to open the door to our best friends and force her to empty her sack to the bottom. What proves clearly, I repeat, that we can compel our Muse to pay her visits at fixed hours, is, the fact is notorious that many great artists have their favourite hours for composing, which most often are forced upon them by the exigencies of their lives, as well as by their domestic conditions. Some are of the morning, others of the evening, as indeed are nearly all the workers in ideas: a few are of the afternoon; indeed, everyone has his own manner of working.

Haydn was a very early riser, and yet he never worked except in full dress, in which he was like Buffon; he began by shaving himself carefully, powdered himself and put on his finger a certain ring, a sapphire, I believe, surrounded with brilliants, which had been given to him by the great Frederick, unless it was Prince Esterhazy; that done, he shut himself up in a quiet room and wrote for several consecutive hours, five or six, without stopping.

Mozart, the gentle and pious Mozart, was sometimes less particular, and composed a little everywhere, and under all conditions. "When I feel well disposed, in good humour and given up to myself altogether, when I am alone and have a calm and satisfied mind, as, for instance, when I am travelling in a good carriage, or taking a stroll after a good meal, or in bed at night without being asleep, then it is that ideas come to me and throng into my mind. Those that please me, I retain, and even hum; at least, so others have told me. It seems to me impossible to say whence they come to me and how they arrive; what is certain is that I cannot make them come when I wish." * Happily they came often enough without that, and pursued him even into the restaurants of Vienna, Prague and Munich, where he was very fond of playing billiards and smoking a pipe, and composing in his head.

Rossini, I can personally testify, composed almost constantly and in all ways, rarely at the piano, most often in the evening or at night, and like Mozart, often found inspiration in a carriage or post-chaise. In the irregular joltings of these vehicles, he perceived rhythm, and of these rhythms, melodies were born. There is no doubt that he would have found them in the trepidation of the railroad, if he had dared to try; but he had such a dread of this mode of locomotion that no one was ever able to induce him to set foot in a car. Who knows whether the automobile may not become a new source of inspiration?

* Mozart, *Correspondence.*

Handel, the man of mighty conceptions, was far from despising the support of a bottle of very good wine.

Gluck preferred champagne, and composed violently gesticulating, walking up and down, and acting all his characters, often in the open air, on the lawn, in a garden.

Beethoven also undoubtedly found a powerful auxiliary to inspiration in motion and walking. Whatever the season, every day after dinner, which was at one o'clock, according to the Viennese custom, he set out for a walk, and with big strides twice made the circuit of the city of Vienna. Neither cold, nor heat, nor rain, nor hail was able to stop him. Then it was that his heat of fancy attained its full ardour. It would seem that the movement of his legs was of service to the activity of his genius. When he lived in the country, he often walked the whole day long, always alone, and in the most rural and solitary places. "He composed as he walked and never wrote a note before the piece he had in his head was entirely finished." * His ideas were slowly and laboriously elaborated, and his themes, even those that presented themselves under the simplest and most natural aspect, were retouched many times by him before he gave them their definitive form, as we can see for ourselves by looking through his manuscripts collected in the house of his birth at Bonn; but when it was fixed, the composition in its entirety was grasped by his mighty intelligence. He was therefore abstracted to an extraordinary degree.

* Fétis, *Biographie Universelle des musiciens.*

He would enter a restaurant, sit down for an instant and ask the stupefied waiter for the bill, without having ordered anything. His clumsiness was prodigious, "he usually broke everything he touched, not a single piece of furniture in his house, and any article of value less than anything else, was safe from his attacks, and many times his ink-pot fell into the piano by which he was working," * which, religiously preserved in the museum of Bonn, still retains its indelible traces. Although he had always lived in the midst of the high Viennese aristocracy, in which drawing-room dances were held in high honour, "he never succeeded in dancing in time." †

Hérold composed while walking, humming or singing, often in the Champs-Elysées and invariably passed his best friends by without recognizing them.

Gounod composed especially at the table, or, at least, in his head; when he wrote, everything was absolutely clear in his brain; his manuscripts prove this. He always had a notebook with him, or near him, in which he jotted down his ideas as they took form in his mind. This he did under all circumstances, even at table. It does not appear that he had a predilection for any special hours, but it is certain that he did not work at night, at least during the latter part of his life, but preferably after dinner and very early in the evening. In his immense and imposing work-room, he had a grand organ by Cavaillé Coll, an Erard

* W. de Lenz, *Beethoven et ses trois styles.*

† Ferd. Ries *(pupil of Beethoven).*

grand piano, and a Pleyel piano-bureau which often served him as a writing-table.

Wagner liked to write standing up before a large table-desk like the cash-desks in the shops; his scores were written without erasures, in a superb calligraphic hand, admirable for its clearness and firmness, and worthy of a professional copyist.

Berlioz, who played no instruments but the guitar, flute and flageolet, necessarily worked at the table.

Franck, who was the head of a school, scarcely composed at all till after nine o'clock in the evening, occupied as he was nearly the whole day by his lessons and other professional duties, and continued somewhat far into the night. A marvellous improviser, he preferred to work at the piano; and, as if to get himself warmed up, he always began by playing to himself several works by contemporary composers of his liking, among whom often figured C. V. Alkan, a musician very little known to the present generation, but whose piano works, so ingenious and solidly constructed, deserve something infinitely higher than this oblivion. He wrote first on a double piano staff, reserving a third line for noting a few characteristic orchestral designs; then he made a complete rough draft in pencil, retouched it minutely, and then wrote out the final score in ink.

Meyerbeer wrote in a regular manner in the evening, and his servant had orders to drag him away from the piano at the stroke of midnight.

Schumann would not admit that anyone could write otherwise than at the table. He worked a little in

the morning and a little in the evening, but he ripened and combined his works for a long time before putting a note down on paper, and tried passages from them on the piano.

Mendelssohn, on the contrary, in his character as an admirable improviser, made much use of the piano, and preferred to work in the morning.

Ambroise Thomas, when a bachelor, had a tiny little hole drilled in his door at the height of his eye, through which he could see who rang; and he would hardly open to anybody except his collaborators or his favourite pupils. When you got in, about eight o'clock in the morning, on his piano, written in pencil, you always saw music in course of being written, which he carefully laid aside on your arrival. Hence we may suppose that he worked in the morning, and perhaps in the evening also. This is all that I know of him at that period. In his ripe manhood and in his old age, he always carried about him pads of ruled paper on which he noted the ideas that presented themselves to his imagination. In the middle of a walk, or a conversation, or a repast with intimate friends, you saw him suddenly cease talking, his eyes became dreamy, and he took a little pad out of his pocket. As to the actual work of writing, he liked complete isolation, and much preferred the night-time, in Paris as well as in the country. He often composed in bed, but often also he got up and remained at the piano for several hours. An interesting detail is that he never passed a day without, on rising in the morning, after a few exercises of hygienic gymnastics, spend-

ing an hour on scales, exercises and studies always the same, by Moscheles, Hummel, and Chopin, his favourite composer.

Auber generally worked at night, and very late, till two or three in the morning, in order to avoid outside noises. His old servant, Sophie, who looked after his linen, did not like barrel-organs; one day she said to Auber in my presence: "I have a horror of barrel-organs, I much prefer the noise that you make at night with your piano." This sally made M. Auber laugh heartily.

When the exigencies of his life in society obliged him to abandon his work in the evening, he got up at five in the morning and worked till eleven.

Halévy had a table-piano that had been made for him by Pleyel. He was quite willing to converse as he orchestrated. From time to time, he would draw out his keyboard, strike a few chords on it, and then push it back like a simple drawer and continue to write.

Boïeldieu also wrote at the piano.

Félicien David, not being much of a pianist, sometimes sought the aid of his violin.

Adolphe Adam almost always worked at his grand piano, the right-hand side of whose keyboard was stained with innumerable splashes of ink; he played eight, ten, or twelve bars, and then wrote them down.

Bizet worked especially in the evening and still more at night; he often made use of a piano-bureau by Pleyel, like Gounod and Halévy.

Guiraud worked from the moment he got up, which

occurred at noon at the earliest, at four o'clock at the latest; he continued till six o'clock, stopped to dine, and again set to work till a late hour of the night. He also made use of the piano, but only as a check after writing at his table.

Léo Delibes installed his work-table beside his upright piano in a sufficiently silent and comfortably padded attic above his apartment.

Massenet composes only in the morning, from five to nine o'clock, and at the table: at nine, his composition day is finished!

But let us not commit any indiscretions with regard to illustrious living composers, let us leave them to work in their own way.

I may say that several musicians of former days had some strange habits:

Cimarosa, for example, contrary to all the others, who wanted calm and silence, found a stimulant to his ardour in light and noise.

Paesiello never felt himself better inspired than when buried under thick coverings.

Sarti, it is said, scarcely ever composed except in profound obscurity.

Méhul took pleasure in placing upon his piano, facing him, a death's head, which leads us to believe that he also wrote at the piano, otherwise it would probably have been more agreeable to him to put it on the table.

I will not be responsible for these last; I only repeat what has been told me. Analogous and well-known eccentricities, however, have existed among

many writers and masters of speech. Balzac worked only from midnight to noon; Buffon, like Haydn, as we have already said, in court dress, with lace cuffs, and powdered; Milton wrote with pleasure only when listening to music, than which nothing can be more disturbing; and lastly, the great preacher Bourdaloue liked to play the violin before going into the pulpit, and was never more eloquent than after having indulged in this enjoyment.

As we have seen, every master has his individual way of calling his Muse. If it is so with them, why should it not be the same for composers who are only starting? Then there are many things that we can do without her immediate help and without her constant presence: all the material details of Orchestration that depend more on talent than on genius, the thousand little retouches that are only mechanical, and what not?

We can always find means of occupying ourselves usefully while awaiting her arrival, the days on which she is late, and to see you harnessed to work very often brings her. All means are good; the final result alone is to be considered.

The obligation of composing only in the evening is especially felt by those artists who inhabit a noisy quarter of a great city. At that hour, we have no longer to fear inopportune visits and annoyances of every kind; the noises outside have quieted down; we feel assured of our tranquillity, we have not even the fear of being disturbed—that fear that is almost as perturbative as the disturbance itself. The composer

has as much need of calm as the painter of sunlight effects: the painter takes advantage of the hours that the sun is good enough to grant him; the musician should know how to profit by isolating himself during the silent hours, and drive out of his mind, if he can, all ideas that are foreign to his art, every cause of distraction, torment or care. "Preoccupation is the death of occupation," says Gounod, whose fine thoughts, always so profound, cannot be too much meditated upon. We must know how to drive it away at all costs and force ourselves to concentrate our whole attention on the goal to be attained. It is perhaps for this reason even more than merely for the sake of destroying the material noises coming from outside, that we see several composers (Bizet, Guiraud, Ambroise Thomas, Franck) make use of the piano as a sort of appetizer for the mind, disengaging the latter for a moment from the cares of existence, and thus putting aside the causes that disturb the conception of the idea.

It goes without saying that the works conceived with a view to virtuosity, such as the Concertos, and the great or little pieces for an instrument treated in *solo*, gain greatly by being written when we have at hand the instrument for which they are intended, if we know how to play it. The composer who is a violinist has no right to write a passage without trying its effect; the composer writing for the piano should therefore naturally like to put his piece together by playing it; but however this may be, these should also be capable of composing whatever it may be without the aid of

any instrument at all, if that is necessary, as soon as they can obtain absolute silence around them, unless they are not complete artists, but virtuoso-composers. "The fingers should execute what the mind has conceived; not the inverse. . . . If music proceeds from your inner meaning, if you have felt it, it will have the same effect on others." *

For those, however, who prefer to compose at the piano, which does not hinder them from first ripening their ideas by meditation, a valuable auxiliary would be a keyboard-register, automatically inscribing in some manner or other, but easy to read and transcribe, all that is confided to it. Many interesting attempts in this direction have been made already, and it may be confidently presumed that in the near future somebody will succeed in creating a really practical type. Those that have so far been constructed aim especially at automatic *repetition* by means of a manual or clockwork movement, which gives them some likeness to a mechanical piano (one can obtain a result of the same nature with a good phonograph that does not too greatly disfigure the *timbre*); what would be far more useful than this repetition for an improvizing pianist, is the more or less conventional graphic notation of his idea by a series of dots and dashes traced on an endless band provided with a staff and unrolling on a cylinder placed beneath the keyboard while being played; so that by taking this band off the apparatus he can re-read his entire improvization, which he will then only have to transcribe, at the same time

* Schumann.

adding those modifications and ameliorations resulting from meditation.

All who have heard Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin and Mendelssohn improvize are unanimous in affirming that it was then, when relieved from the material shackles of writing and given up to their whole spontaneity, that they were most moving, and often quite different from what they were in the works over which they had reflected. This will not astonish anybody who has heard any of the great organist-improvizers of the present day whose instantaneous productions are sometimes admirable, and superior in vital intensity to anything that they could have written in the silence of the cabinet. Now, it frequently happens that young composers possess such an organization that the slowness of writing causes them to lose the thread of their ideas, and that not having time to write down all that they think, they let part of it escape, or disfigure it.

It is the same with them as with certain great orators of the bar, the church, or parliament, whose eloquence never rises so high as in the fire of improvization, and who never find expression so happy, words so exact, metaphors so bold and appropriate, when they want to write their discourse. For these, there is stenography; but no one has yet found stenography for music; it is probable even that this will never be found unless it is merely melodic, which might well be useful, but it would be insufficient.

And since we have been led to speak of improvization, that individual and seductive art, let us say in

passing that people have a very small and incomplete idea of it when they imagine that it consists merely in yielding oneself up to the chance of inspiration, by letting the fingers run and wander at random over the keyboard! Where the mind does not work there can never be any manifestation of art, but a simple act of routine, despicable by its very unconscionableness and by its automatism and one which does not deserve to attract attention.

Never, oh never, does an improvizer worthy of the name embark without knowing in advance what he wants to say, what form as a whole his piece will have, and a general plan perfectly skeletonized in its broad lines. A few insignificant or imperceptible details will alone be left to momentary caprice, to spontaneity, to certain mechanical or unconscious impulses, a sort of finger habit which seems to exclude errors of style, and this is the very least that is left to chance, if indeed we may thus designate the result of prodigious ability and an inexplicable faculty that has almost become an instinct. It would be unpardonable for him who possesses it not to cultivate it, since it demands no new study beyond those that we have already indicated, and since the special qualities that it brings into play namely, appropriateness, *sang-froid* and presence of mind are those which are developed most easily by frequent practice, by habit and by will.

When the question is one of improvization or written composition, whatever may be the manner of composing that any one has adopted because it is easiest for him or conforms best to his nature, it must never be

forgotten that emotion should always preside over the conception of every work of art, and that to communicate this emotion to others, and make them share in it, is the supreme goal to which the truly great artist should perpetually tend.

This thought is marvellously well expressed by two strong and very different minds, who at least on this point were in agreement, Lamennais and Victor Cousin: "If sound possesses of itself an expressive power, this power should be applied and brought into play by the artist, since it is nothing but his instrument" (Lamennais). "The problem of art is to reach the soul through the body" (V. Cousin); which clearly means that to write music without the desire of moving or interesting is like talking without saying anything, which is the most tiresome thing in the world.

And this is true whatever may be the nature of the work, its elevation or its futility, its length or its brevity, some feeling must always emanate from it, and consequently must have been put into it. Its form and importance are of little consequence: Beethoven is quite as moving in his Sonatas as in his Symphonies; Schubert rises to a touching eloquence in the shortest of his melodies, certain of which do not exceed eight bars; Chopin's Nocturnes are true poems, on the same level with his Ballades and Scherzos; and Boileau's celebrated verse, "A faultless sonnet is worth as much as a long poem," may be just as well applied to music.

Therefore, there are few great composers who have not taken delight in producing, if only to rest themselves after their more highly developed works, short

pieces, to which the conciseness of the style lends an additional charm. Neither should the student-composer disdain them, for this will contribute towards making his talent more flexible by teaching him that quality, as rare as it is precious, of being able to express himself at once briefly and completely. Perhaps indeed he will feel himself led to adopt for the generality of his productions this more intimate form in which the thought, by rendering itself precise, becomes condensed, which makes the composition more easily understood by the listener. He should not struggle against this inclination and regard this as an inferior kind of composition: it is not the length of a piece that constitutes its beauty; neither is it its complication. Far from that, the most original ideas, the most ingenious and the most interesting operations may often find a place in simple and short pieces. Beethoven with his Sonatinas, Schumann with his *Album à la Jeunnesse*, Mendelssohn in his admirable *Songs without Words*, Gade in his *Noël*, Bizet in his *Jeux d'enfants*, Gounod, Massenet, Delibes, and Schumann in their melodies, the colossal John Sebastian Bach in his *Inventions* in two or three parts, and many others have proved this.

Everybody knows the pretty story of Horace Vernet's horse: He was engaged by a very rich English sportsman to paint the picture of a very beautiful horse in which its owner very justly took great pride. He had the animal brought to his yard once, twice—ten times. Several weeks later, he requested the Englishman to come to his studio and see the result. En-

thusiasm of the latter, who was ecstatic over the perfection of the work, the perfect resemblance and the lifelike feeling that the artist had fixed upon the canvas, and which rendered this picture a marvellous work of art, really a perfect masterpiece! And he asked the price.

"Fifty thousand francs," said Horace Vernet.

Stupefaction of the sportsman! "What, fifty thousand francs? But you have only worked ten times on this picture."

"Do not deceive yourself, my lord," the great painter replied, as coldly as wittily, "I have worked more than forty years on your horse."

And he was right. And this reply contains a deep lesson. In the work of an artist, of whatever kind, are reflected all his qualities, all his talent acquired so laboriously, all his knowledge and the experience of his entire life.

If all painters had wished to paint only historical pictures, we should have had no Teniers nor Gerard Dows; and we have never heard it said that Meissonier's pictures lose any of their value because of being contained in a very small frame. Everyone should know how to choose the genre or genres for which he is best adapted, and keep to them, always keeping perfection in view. If it is true that "art is acquired by study and practice," as d'Alembert says, it seems good and wise, however, not to squander our efforts in too many different fields, particularly at first; we run the risk of not excelling in any one of them. Rare are such geniuses as Mozart and Saint-Saëns, who can

attack victoriously every manifestation of musical thought.

Finally, while strongly respecting the established principles and admiring their logic, we must not renounce innovations if we are conscious of acting judiciously in introducing them:

> Sometimes in its course, a vigorous mind,
> Feeling the restraint of art too much, departs from the prescribed rules,
> And from art itself learns to pass art's limits. *

## V. The Progress of Art

It is thus that art progresses and transforms itself. And the modest workers who thus contribute to its slow evolution may be compared to those microscopic madrepores, of which Michelet speaks: "From the day when optics allow us to perceive the infusoria, we see them making mountains, we see the madrepores paving the Ocean." They do a great deal more than pave it, they lift it higher and submerge entire islands, thus changing the geography of the globe; they have their part to play in creation. Each of them builds his cell a little higher than those already constructed, just as the artist, by taking as his base and support the works of his predecessors, should try to elevate still a little higher, according to his means, the construction of the edifice of art, of which he will never be more than one of the labourers whatever the force of his genius may be.

* Boileau, *Art poétique.*

And let him not regard this comparison with an animalcule as something to wound or belittle his part. On the contrary, it is this spirit of abnegation, personal disinterestedness and devotion to Art, that raises him above all others and makes him a priest of the Beautiful, that eternal cult, and may justify that fine remark of Proudhon's: "Of all classes of society, that of the artists is the richest in strong souls and noble characters." That is precisely how the artist should be regarded. He who would place his personal interests above that of Art would be as despicable as a politician who would take advantage of temporary position by furthering his own affairs to the detriment of those of his country; a thing which I greatly hope is never seen, and will never be seen anywhere. This does not happen to the artist, for he has too deep a love of the Beautiful not to have also a love of the Good, which is almost inseparable from it. The true artist is essentially good and generous, always affable, cordial and kind, always ready to protect and help his brothers at need, to aid with advice and often with his purse those young people who show a desire to embrace his career, which is at once so hard and so full of attraction, to show them the right road and to guide them with inexhaustible kindness by trying to make it easier than it has been for him, to smooth their way and serve them as a ladder by which they may reach a higher level than he himself has been able to attain. Is not this the part of a fine character? Those who do not answer to this description are not really great artists at heart, they are artisans who may indeed be es-

timable practitioners or manufacturers of art, more or less skilful in their calling, but who have no right to the noble title of *Artist*, taken in the high and proud acceptation of the word.

Voltaire, greeting Grétry, said to him: "You are a musician and a man of mind, sir; it is a rare combination." He could not say this to-day, because for a long time, nothing has been more common among great artists than high mentality, unless it is heart and affability.

The artist—I mean here the composer—should be first of all a creator; he should be ceaselessly inventing, considering this as his mission. "Art is to man what the creative faculty is to God." *

In the hierarchy of music, the composer occupies the first rank; the brain that creates being superior to the organ that executes. And it is in this also that he differs entirely from the Singer and the Instrumentalist, who are interpreters, and whose function consists in faithfully transmitting and bringing to the comprehension of the public the author's ideas, embellished more or less by the prestige of their own talent. Their part is none the less beautiful for that; they are the advocates and heralds of talent and genius, which very often owe half their success to them; and they thus contribute powerfully, on their side, to the evolution of musical art, which could not do without interpreters; but theirs is not to invent, that is even forbidden them, while it is not only the right, but the duty of the most insignificant of composers.

* Lamennais.

Now, since for more than two centuries the greatest geniuses have worked ceaselessly to bring modern polyphony to perfection, it would not be extraordinary if this marvellous mine were nearly exhausted. There remains the resource indeed of seeking to create still new forms, but this cannot go very far; the discovery of unknown riches in the domain of Harmony, already thoroughly explored in every direction, seems exceedingly improbable; to do better than has been done, without changing the order of ideas, and this for a long time still, seems to border on the impossible.

It is therefore probable enough that we shall shortly arrive at a kind of turning-point in the history of music, one of those points that have already been found at other times, where Art, not being able to go any further in the path that it has followed for several centuries, and not being able to remain stationary either, which is contrary to its nature, must effect an evolution and open up a new road for itself in countries of an entirely different aspect, perhaps explored formerly, but into which it now penetrates bringing with it the materials for colonization and investigation acquired in the course of its former travels, with processes of fertilization not yet applied to those regions.

Really, it seems impossible to push much further the science of harmonic and orchestral combinations that modern art has developed to their extreme limits, and which have arrived at their *summum*. The route followed has led us up a peak, probably the most elevated that has ever been attained, for it is indeed dizzy-

ing; but beyond which we cannot dream of mounting higher; moreover, we are threatened with famine. It is necessary therefore to descend into the valleys again there to seek and gather some flowers which are melodies, and perhaps replenish our provisions there before dreaming of ascending some other mountain as yet unknown, the distant summit of which is for the moment, and perhaps for a long time to come, veiled from us by the clouds of the future.

It has always happened thus, and thus also it will always be, because it is impossible that it can be otherwise.

We are witnessing the complete blossoming of the system of art inaugurated in the second half of the Seventeenth Century, the most illustrious representatives of which were Bach and Handel for Germany; Scarlatti, and, a little later, Pergolese for Italy; and Lully and Rameau for France. Their geniuses so diverse gave birth to three great national Schools, two of which particularly, the German and the French, have imposed upon themselves the mission of developing, although in different ways, the grand symphonic style and modern counterpoint, thus putting to new use the materials accumulated by the preceding musical civilizations, which kept religious art principally in view, almost the sole employment of the voices, and ended in the creation of the Fugue.

Likewise, the treasures of harmonic combinations and the discoveries in instrumentation accumulated for three centuries by the present schools will not be lost by those that follow. This is a rich inheritance that

belongs to them, that it is their right and duty to cultivate so as to make it serve for what will be their ideal, pruning away certain superfluities or useless complications, just as the masters of our time have known how to do in rejecting all that has seemed to them puerile and anti-artistic in the fantastic ornamentation of the old Counterpoint of the Middle Ages, whilst making the best use of the strong blocks of the dead art bequeathed by our ancestors for the erection of their admirable building.

Such transformations are not produced suddenly; they are the fruit of centuries of efforts, and many generations toil in obscurity for them until the day when a man of genius who combines them all appears in all his glory. A new peak has been climbed on which he plants his standard, and which henceforth will bear his name. But how many modest pioneers, unknown to fame, have had to illuminate his path, pointing out the dangers and rocks, blazing it, so to speak, and harnessing themselves to his triumphal chariot.

One must not despise these bold soldiers of art who construct the works of approach, never fearing to enter courageously into unexplored and sometimes blind paths, and who, in very truth, do more for the march and progress of music than those who, walking in the steps of the leader of the file, seek only the success and applause of the multitude. " Art does not exist in order to procure wealth. Be a noble artist and the rest will be given to you into the bargain," says Schumann, who knew how to preach by example. Everybody must bring a stone; no matter how small

it may be, the contribution will never be useless, provided it is sincere and brought in good faith.

Alfred de Musset was not afraid to write:

> An artist is a man, he writes for men.
> Liberty is the priestess of the temple.

The composer, filled with the nobility of his mission, should not therefore apply himself to doing again what has already been done, for there is no advancement in this, but to creating anew, to venturing ceaselessly into paths where there may be something to discover, and to inventing ingenious methods. But when I say venture, there are at least two ways of venturing: we may venture heedlessly or venture prudently; here is where the *rôle* of talent intervenes, crying " stop," if we have taken the wrong road. Then it is at least useless to push research in the direction of careers already exploited, where we can discover nothing but what has been discovered already by others; or, if we do this, let it be knowingly and with the intention of going farther. Hence the utility of erudition and intimate knowledge of the Masters of the past, in a word the History of Music.

What will be the coming Art? That is impossible to predict.

Nevertheless, after the manner in which the preceding evolutions have announced and produced themselves, considering also certain tendencies which manifest themselves in the highest representatives of the art of to-day, we may conjecture that a return to the tonalities of Plain-Song or the Greek scales, much

richer than ours, with a preponderance given to the melodic element, allied to a far greater simplicity of procedure, is not improbable.—Everybody knows that in every species of art the greatest effects are produced by the simplest means, and that in everything, good taste and distinction do not consist in producing embarrassment nor a parade of one's knowledge. Now, the farther we have strayed from this simplicity of method, the greater the chance that we shall return to it; the same reason should attract composers to the antique modes, which, long forgotten and embellished with prodigious artifices of Harmony, now appear as novelties. Likewise, it seems natural that the purely melodic element which latterly has been in truth too much disdained, will claim its ancient rights. Who lives will see. Not till two hundred years hence shall I know if I have been a good prophet.

# PART V

## OF THE MEANS OF RECTIFYING A MUSICAL EDUCATION THAT HAS BEEN ILL-DIRECTED AT THE BEGINNING, AND HOW TO REMEDY IT

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### I. Suggestions for Instrumentalists, Singers and Composers

So far we have only had to consider straightforward guidance of a musical education undertaken normally, and pursued with a precise and clearly defined aim; side by side with this rational course we have foreseen and admitted irregularities caused by circumstances and by almost inevitable modifications of tastes and aptitudes, though causing, on the whole, deviations of but little importance, slightly prejudicial to the studies as a whole, and merely entailing delays that are more or less to be regretted.

The question that presents itself now is altogether different: it concerns what advantage can be derived from incomplete musical education, ill understood and ill directed at the start, and how it can be rectified, completed, or ameliorated.

Let us say at once that this is the most difficult thing in the world, and that we must not deceive our-

selves on this point. We can never hope to derive anything but a relatively modest advantage from studies that have been ill conducted, at least unless they have been pursued only for a very short time. To say or to think otherwise would be the negation of all that we have studied up to this point, and that has shown us the utility of a logical plan in the normal progress of these studies. *Save exceptions of extreme rarity,* of which we shall speak, however, it must always be remembered that those who have made a false start must suffer the evil consequences and inevitably remain in a state of inferiority; that a very great amount of tardy and hurried work is not equivalent to work quietly done in its own time; that two mouthfuls at once are not favourable to digestion; that "lost time can never be recovered," and that "There is no advantage in running, it is necessary to start in time." *

Let us not bear too heavily, however, upon these demoralizing considerations, but proceed in quest of means by which we can partially remedy this deplorable state of things.

Of course, if it is merely a question of a child that has been *badly started,* and if this is perceived at the end of one or two months, or even a year or two, the thing is very simple; we must consider what has been done simply as null and void, try to make him forget it, place him under a serious teacher, and begin again on a new basis.

This is not the question that requires to be studied.

* La Fontaine, *La Lièvre et la Tortue (fable).*

## RECTIFYING A MUSICAL EDUCATION

It is the very frequent case of the individual, man or woman, who, having reached the adult age, perceives that his musical education, which he had thought satisfactory, is full of gaps, whether because it was not undertaken in time, or because it has been wrongly directed, or because he himself has not given the necessary attention to it, or because certain circumstances placed obstacles in the way, or because of any other reason whatsoever, regrets that things are as they are, and wants to make up the deficiencies of his previous studies, even at the cost of difficult and bitter toil.

We must not hide from ourselves the fact that this is an extremely difficult thing and one that demands before everything else an energetic and persistent determination.

It is enough, however, that there have been manifest examples of success, some of which were even brilliant, to show there is no reason systematically to dissuade those who have the courage and the constancy from again beginning their artistic education.

But here, contrarily to what we have hitherto said, we must distinguish between those who take to music for their simple pleasure and those, on the other hand, who find themselves under the necessity of making their living by the practice of this art.

The latter are indubitably the most interesting, and since the advice that we can offer is not the same for both categories, we will begin with them.

As we cannot dream of making something out of nothing, we will always suppose that there exists a

certain basis of knowledge, of ability practically acquired, or, at least, special and well characterized aptitudes. To seek to ameliorate something that does not exist would be sheer folly, and there is no question here of opening the artistic career to those who, recognizing themselves as incapable of practising any other profession, take up this one as a makeshift. Moreover, to tempt them thus would be the worst service that we could render them, and attracting auxiliaries of this kind would be the worst service that we could render to art. No matter how unfinished an artist may be, on account of his defective or insufficient studies, it is rarely that he does not possess some quality, even if it is but slightly developed; now, it is this quality that must be sought, in order first to cultivate and then to bring it into prominence by surrounding it with others, if there is still time. For the sake of clearness, therefore, we will proceed with *types*, examining each by itself and endeavouring to discover the particular means, few enough, alas! that can best serve in this new art of saving the remnants.

The first type that presents itself to the mind, because it is the most frequent one, is that of a person whose sole qualification is that of playing the piano fairly well. (I mean by this that every auxiliary study has been neglected.) One cannot go very far with that. But if, while striving after mechanical perfection, which must certainly not be abandoned, since it is the brightest gem in the crown, we devote only two hours a day to sight-reading, and another

to Harmony, for about two years, things will assume quite a different aspect. Thenceforward we may hope to be employed as an accompanist, which, although modest enough, sets one foot in the stirrup of the career, and may open many doors later.—The study of reading at sight may perfectly well be carried on in this special case without the aid of a teacher; to be serious is sufficient. We can take out a reading subscription at a music publisher's, and set ourselves, for example, the task of reading a new score every day, in the manner previously indicated. We must not be afraid to begin with very easy, simple and ingenuous scores, of such old French authors as Monsigny, Dalayrac, Grétry (a Belgian), passing afterwards to Méhul and Gluck. Quite the contrary; indeed, it would be wise to stick to them for a certain time and then gradually take up more difficult ones, such as Hérold and Auber, before attacking Meyerbeer, Verdi, and finally the modern school.

Concurrently, and in proportion as we feel ourselves capable, we should read works for the piano at sight, the pure classics at first, and then a little of every school, carefully setting aside light and mere *showy* compositions that are of a nature to hurt the taste. In a case such as the one under consideration, we must possess enough judgment and good sense to repair our own education. In pursuing this study methodically and intelligently, we shall also give ourselves a slight superficial view of the History of Music, and become a good reader at the piano, which, to a certain extent, will supply the place of *solfeggio*.

Of elementary Theory, we shall learn only what is strictly necessary in order to undertake Harmony: some ideas of the intervals, scales and keys. With regard to Harmony, a teacher is indispensable, even if we intend to restrict ourselves to a simple knowledge of its rules, which can be acquired in eighteen months or two years of work; but it is probable that once started, we shall not stop there, but will appreciate the necessity of carrying this study to the very end. Here, there would be no great harm done, beyond the last years, and the consequent almost impossibility of becoming a veritable *virtuoso*, which is very important, since Harmony, being a science as much as an art, can be studied at nearly any age.

Let us now imagine an entirely opposite case: a very good reader, but a bad piano player, which annuls his talent, by preventing it from revealing itself. Here, naturally, it is the mechanism that must be worked for, but the first thing will be completely to suppress reading at sight, for the practice of it can only tend to maintain and develop the faults. In doing this, there need be no fear that the quality of sight-reading will be atrophied: this faculty is never lost; whether it is natural or acquired, it can be very rapidly recovered even after a cessation of cultivation for several years, unlike most of the other studies. —As for the study of mechanism, it must be resumed very far back, from the very first exercises, and with a scrupulous conscientiousness, devoting to it as many hours a day as patience can bear, and obstinately insisting upon each difficulty that arises before going

on to another, and constantly returning to those that seem to have been vanquished. In order to acquire at a late period a certain mechanism, an excellent and curious work is the *Rhythm des doights*, by Stamaty, who, I believe, was the only teacher of Saint-Saëns, which may suffice for his posthumous glory. We may use many others, but always choosing them among those, which like the above, contain inexhaustible combinations of exercises upon all possible and imaginable difficulties, from the most elementary to the most transcendent. For exercises, keep to those of Cramer and the *Gradus* of Clementi, having the perseverance to devote to each all the time that is necessary to play it irreproachably, with flexibility and without any difficulty whatever. It is absolutely useless to study pieces: if, however, you must do so, choose them among those that demand qualities of style and interpretation rather than virtuosity; do not select difficult ones, and then push their study to the highest degree of perfection attainable, just like the studies, upon which it would be wiser to concentrate your efforts entirely. But above all, I insist that there should be no return to reading at sight for a long time, that the desire should not be indulged even for amusement though only for a few pages; this would be opening the door again to the bad habit and to lose in a few moments the good work of many days.

What we have just said of a pianist who is a very good reader and a very mediocre executant applies

naturally, in the works cited here, to every instrumentalist who finds himself in the same condition. A distinction must always be made between an execution that is simply insufficient because it is unskilful, resulting most frequently either from lack of study or studies carelessly performed, and a more profoundly defective execution. The latter is the result of false principles received, which are more deeply rooted the longer and more confidently they have been cultivated. Such are, for the violinist, a wrong holding of the body, the violin and the bow; for the player of a wind instrument, a bad *embouchure;* for the pianist, the habit, that certain teachers still commend, of holding the wrists low and the fingers elongated, etc. We are confronted here with veritable *vices* of execution which must be eradicated. One means that is often successful is to leave the instrument alone and never touch it at all for several months, and upon resuming the studies, give almost exclusive attention to correcting the vicious habits and to carrying the opposite qualities even to exaggeration. For pianists and those who play instruments of strings and bow, one excellent thing, during these months of suspension, is to practice every day some gymnastics for the arms, dumbbells, the trapeze, and still better, fencing with both hands. From these exercises, the effect of which is to make them forget the old habits up to a certain point, the arms and wrists are strengthened, and the muscles, having become more vigorous and supple, are in a better condition to accommodate themselves to the new and more normal use to which we want to train

them; and if any stiffness remains in the joints of the fingers, the sole inconvenience that is to be feared, it will rapidly disappear.

Let us pass on to another frequent case, that of a singer endowed with a good voice (without this, it is useless to concern ourselves with him), who already knows how to use it well, but is ignorant of everything else in music because it was thought quite sufficient to teach him to sing. Sooner or later, there always comes a moment, and let us hope for his own sake that it will come as soon as possible, when he will be sensible of the embarrassment caused by this lack of instruction in musical technique, and will seek for the means of remedying it. Given an age when we will suppose that he already has a voice, not only formed, but trained, the means to be employed for him are exactly contrary to those that suit the child. With the child, we can count upon intuition, instinct, memory and the spirit of imitation, and reasoning has very little to do with the case; but here it is the reason that stands before everything else; and, in consequence, the order of studies has to be inverted.— The intelligent pupil should therefore, first of all, without giving up any of his vocal work, set himself to work courageously on the Theory of Music, not in an abridgment, nor in any other book intended for infantile schools, reduced to a kind of catechism by questions and answers in which he would not learn anything, but in a serious and analytical work, of which, moreover, there are many good ones, that con-

tain questions and problems to be solved at the end of a complete account of the principles of music. This is the hardest of all, and cannot be well accomplished without the aid of a teacher; for on the one hand there is no time to lose, and on the other, the question is not one of acquiring superficial or illusory ideas, which amount to almost nothing, but a complete knowledge of Theory as a whole and in its smallest details, that permits no gap to remain in the mind.— The same teacher can, very probably, initiate his pupil at the same time into a summary knowledge of the keyboard, so that without actually being able to play the piano he may help himself in his studies of singing, and not have to be perpetually dependent upon and at the mercy of his accompanist. It is in this way that he will first feel the benefits of his tardy instruction. But he must not stop there; it will now be fitting to devote himself to *solfeggio*, to reading in every key, to reading at sight melodies with words, etc.; and all those exercises that we have presented as elementary in the case of a study conducted normally and progressively will become for the singer, being given inversely, complementary and perfecting exercises that present no serious difficulties and are very pleasant. He should however keep watch, and his teacher with him, against anything that might be of a nature to displace his voice or fatigue it, which is always easy to avoid either by singing softly or by transposing an octave higher or lower those low or high notes that are beyond his compass. Moreover, every singer who really desires to perfect his artistic educa-

tion, with regard to his ear and his musical intelligence, should eagerly seek every opportunity of taking part in *ensembles*, or choruses. This is just as useful for him, and he must understand it if he is really artistic at heart, as it is for the instrumentalist to participate in orchestral performances. One cannot truly call oneself a musician without having done this, more or less frequently, but the oftener the better. Not to squander the voice but to manage it carefully, if it is precious or fragile, is merely legitimate prudence; but to know how to act as a musician and to be considered as such, taking a part in Duos, Trios, or Quartets and also *ensembles* is indispensable; and this is the thing that will always be most appreciated by true artists.—If he intends to be a teacher, he will do well to read very attentively and without prejudice a great number of methods, first the most celebrated ones, and then the others; for even in those which at first sight seem the most insignificant, and even ridiculous, one is often surprised to find a sensible idea or a new procedure which may be employed in some rare case. Notes should be taken of all this, so as to be able, when occasion requires, to turn without hesitation to the work in which one has seen such or such an ingenious exercise, or practical counsel to apply at the proper time. This is the basis of the experience which alone makes real teachers.

A young violinist who, although playing his instrument pretty well, has not the qualities of *brio* and communicative warmth so necessary to a soloist,

or one who although having a very complete talent, loses command of his instrument when he plays in public, can first endeavour to make a specialty of the more sober and at least as elevated class of chamber-music; and certainly there is nothing derogatory in this. Here, particularly if he begins by playing the second violin, which is less in evidence, he will have opportunities of getting accustomed to the public and of losing his timidity. If this does not suffice, he can take up the viola, good players of which are rarer and always in great demand. This will not be in the least hurtful to his talents as a violinist, for, as we have already said, the best study for a viola player is to cultivate the violin and the viola simultaneously. From that time, his career will be as follows: viola in the Quartet and Orchestra, and the violin in lessons of accompaniment. For these lessons, it will be useful for him to know thoroughly the entire classic repertory of Sonatas for the Violin and Piano, as also to become familiar with fine contemporary works, not only by working over his part if he has not already acquired this in the course of his studies, but by hearing them played as often as possible by great artists, so as to be able to transmit their spirit and traditions as purely as possible to his pupils.

Another type: a musician who is irresistibly attracted to composition, but who has not been through the necessary studies. This is exactly the case in which Dalayrac found himself. He had felt his vocation from his earliest years, but he was opposed and prevented from following it for a long time by his fam-

ily, particularly his father, who had decided at first to make him a magistrate, and then an officer, systematically suppressing every inclination for musical study, even as an amateur. There is no doubt but that he would have risen infinitely higher without these grievous obstacles, considering his astonishing facility of melodic creation, his exquisite taste, his excellent dramatic instinct and an imagination as varied as abundant. What saved him was his good sense; having reached an age when at last he had the right to direct his life as he pleased, he took his lack of knowledge and erudition into account and knew how to limit himself to works of an amiable, light, gracious and easy style, in which his genius shines notwithstanding all kinds of awkward writing, against which he would have been broken if he had ventured to attempt works of more elevated character and higher flight. In this, he set a noble and good example, worthy of imitation, but which few are sufficiently modest to follow. We may remark, in fact, that intuitive composers who lack technical instruction, never forming an exact idea of the difficulties, in their unreflecting ardour are nearly always carried away with the desire to begin with some long work, such as an Opera, or, at least, a Symphony, some work in fact that is absolutely impossible to achieve without long preliminary studies. In this they resemble the students who in their desk, between a paper of Mayflies and a box of silkworms, produce a tragedy in five acts and who would never dream of properly balancing a quatrain of cross rhymes. This is the

fearless and sympathetic courage of one who is ignorant of danger.

The best advice to give these is to read carefully the very complete (I believe) plan that we have traced of studies that are desirable for the erudition of composers, eliminating from it what seems to them superfluous, or, with greater reason, what they find that they have already studied with some other end in view, and to make choice, according to the degree of their knowledge or ignorance, of the branches in which it is advisable to make their first efforts. To be sure, they must choose branches which are within their reach, and beware of putting the cart before the horse; for example, by studying Orchestration without first knowing something about Harmony, to which we often see them singularly inclined, doubtless not understanding that in order to orchestrate something, that something must exist, and be normally built, and that it is in the parts of Harmony or Counterpoint that the embryo of the orchestral designs is found. If they should commit any such indiscretion, it would be disastrous, for it would be simply starting again on a wrong road. Therefore it is a very good thing to commit oneself, if it is possible, to the direction of some musician well instructed in all of these things, a composer or Kapelmeister, who would always be more apt and in a better position than ourselves to judge sanely of our own situation. If circumstances do not permit of consulting one, then act prudently and distrust the very natural and easily explicable propensity that one always has of going too fast, a

dangerous propensity against which one has to struggle energetically, while regarding it as a symptom of excellent augury in itself.—If the student-composer has need of going back to the very sources of technical instruction, of pure theory and notation, it is very probable that he can do this by himself by means of some full and methodical work. But for the study of Harmony or Counterpoint, he will not be able to dispense with a teacher any better because he is already behind, quite the contrary. It is otherwise with all that concerns Instrumentation and the study of forms, for which the reading of strongly written works and special Treatises will suffice for a mind open to ideas of analysis and accustomed to reflection.

During the time that these studies last, the student is not forbidden to compose; that would be putting his patience to a too severe and useless trial. But he would act wisely in knowing how to limit himself provisionally to productions of restricted length and generally of slight development, in which he can apply his new science in proportion as it grows; or again, if he is forced by his temperament, throwing off on paper simple sketches and rough draughts, postponing their complete extension and definite form till the day when he will have acquired the necessary talent and skilfulness in writing.

Let us add, however, that it is in Composition that the most unforeseen exceptions may present themselves; a veritable vocation, allied with an energetic character and an iron will, can triumph over all obstacles. There are several examples that show that

Genius can sometimes divine or invent what it has not learned. Therefore we must never despair and abandon what has once been begun.

Another way of being led astray is to have accomplished all the laborious studies of a composer from beginning to end and to perceive finally that the inspiration is defective, that there is a lack of originality and that all the talent acquired can never end in anything but the production of estimable works, doubtless also honourable and well-written, but without the slightest trace of personal genius. Let us say first that the mere fact of realizing this situation of relative impotence, after having devoted many years to an absorbing work and having nursed ourselves with ideas of glory, denotes an extraordinary intelligence and self-knowledge. When one is endowed with such great judgment, one may, while renouncing totally or partially the seductive career dreamed of, see another one opening out before one, which though shining with less splendour, is neither less beautiful nor less worthy of everybody's respect: one can devote oneself to teaching, and become a professor of the first order. In the evolution of art, one will play the part of an organ of transmission. All the knowledge acquired, all the materials collected, all the riches of art which one has accumulated in and for oneself, one transmits, refined and amplified by the work of the mind, to a new generation of young artists full of ardour, among whom will be found a few privileged ones, who, more happy, profiting by them, will realize the dream. Unable to be the flower that un-

folds in the sunshine, one will be the branch that supports and nourishes flowers and fruits.

The greatest joy of a teacher, when he possesses the real love of teaching, is to see his pupils surpass himself; it is like that of the happy father of a family who has succeeded in creating for his children a superior position to his own. The pupils are the professor's artistic descendants; and, although most frequently he reaps nothing but ingratitude, his heart beats and rejoices at the success of each one.—Outside of teaching, or by its side, an erudite and non-producing artist can also assume a very responsible and very often badly-filled post,—that of a critic; we will even say that he seems made for this. "An excellent critic should be an artist who has much knowledge and taste, without prejudice and without envy," Voltaire has said. Is not this exactly the case with him of whom we are speaking? The knowledge and the sentiment of the beautiful he must have acquired in the course of his studies; and he has no reason to have prejudices, nor jealousy, as he is not producing himself. Is Voltaire alone in this opinion? It seems not. This is what Villemain thinks: "To be a good critic, one should be capable of being a good author." This is what Proudhon thinks: "The mission of a critic does not imply the obligation to produce masterpieces and discover the truth." This is what La Bruyère thinks: "A critic is not formed until after many years of observation and study." And I could cite many others. What are these observations and studies of which La Bruyère speaks?

If we are only thinking of musical critics, they are exactly the same as those through which the composer-student has had to pass. Here then is a way entirely open. In saying above that this post is often badly filled, I was thinking of those occasional critics, who are not really scarce, and who, by the single fact that they can hold a pen, think they have the right to judge everything and to speak of everything *ex cathedra;* who would be just as ready to accept literary criticism to-morrow; and, the day after that, of the picture galleries, provided they kept their pen, which is generally a goose-quill. It is to them, and to them alone, that we may apply the famous line of Destouches: "Criticism is easy and art is hard," * so often attributed to Boileau, doubtless on account of its conciseness and incisive form. For in truth, criticism, as it should always be practised, and as it is practised in our days by those who are masters of it, is not such an easy thing. First of all, it demands a very broad general culture joined to complete technical knowledge of the special subject under treatment: "There are many kinds of ignorance, the worst of all is that of the critics"; it is again Voltaire who says this. It next demands a somewhat large amount of eclecticism, permitting one to choose, select and recognize what there is of good in every system, and to reject nothing on account of a preconceived idea; broad ideas are necessary. Finally, it demands a literary turn exempt from pedantry, and a certain dose of amenity and indulgence which should

* Destouches, *Le Glorieux*, Act II., Scene V.

attract, if he has a well-constructed mind, him who has good reasons to know the difficulties of art, and which will permit him, when necessary, to coat the too bitter pills with a little sugar. A critic is not a reporter; he is an initiator and a guide, an educator and a professor; his pupil is the public. This is why the two professions can join forces and mutually complete one another so well.

A pupil who has had the misfortune to lose his time in studying an instrument which is not suitable to his conformation, and upon which he cannot hope to attain the desired skill, can go back to one of those instruments which we have mentioned as capable of being taken up at the adult age, the double-bass, for example, or the brasses. The benefit of the anterior studies will not be entirely lost, and more than once he will be able to turn some of this acquired knowledge to advantage. It is the same with a singer who has lost his voice; if he is a good musician, he can look for an instrument that suits him.

There is no quality so trifling that one cannot derive from it, if not a profession of an artistic character, at least a more or less lucrative occupation bordering upon and indirectly allied with art. A good reader, who is something of a harmonist, can make himself useful as a proof-reader for a music-publisher; even he who can do nothing but write a beautiful manuscript can become a copyist. Moreover, he can perfect himself, learn to transpose and

correct the careless mistakes in the manuscript of amateurs. There are some who have even succeeded in creating veritable bureaux of copying, with numerous employees, and have built up a good business. Many composers like to have duplicate copies of their work before sending it to press, and keep a regular copyist for this. Rossini had one who wrote a beautiful hand, but who had a mania for adding flats. He called him and said: "Tell me, my friend, why have you again put in this flat?" "I don't know, Master," stammered the other, somewhat disconcerted, "*but it seemed sweeter to me that way!!!*" Rossini did not get angry; he took up a great eraser and scratched out the flat.

We feel that this chapter might be indefinitely prolonged by introducing new cases that are much easier to imagine than the numerous examples that present themselves daily, alas! But what is the use? They would only be variants of the preceding ones, and it would be better for us to occupy ourselves with the amateurs.

## II. Suggestions for Amateurs

All the same types of defective or incomplete preliminary instruction, begun too late or badly directed, that we have passed in review in studying the most proper means that can be employed for some profit to be gained, all these same types, we repeat, are necessarily and still more frequently found among the

amateurs. It is very natural that they should be more pronounced with the latter, and with more characteristic faults; for, originally at least and with rare exceptions, the study of amateurs must have been, by the very logic of things, more neglected. Particularly in the case of young people, they have been forced to give precedence to the principal studies, being justly considered as accessories and luxuries, to be undertaken at odd times, in moments of rest and recreation. Now, unless there is some precocious and extraordinarily pronounced inclination, encouraged and approved by the parents, it is very seldom that a young boy, having to choose between a game of football and a music lesson, will not give the former the preference.—My opinion is that he is right.—It is a little different with regard to young girls, in whose general education a much larger part is given to what are called "accomplishments," and who have to learn with good will or by force a little music, drawing and dancing. But in the *Lycées*, Colleges, Convents, and other educational establishments, it is seldom that one can find the necessary time at one's disposal under the existing conditions, and also seldom that well-trained teachers are to be found, or those who have the necessary means of training at their disposal. The so-called accomplishments are therefore drudgery and it is only on holidays that one could indulge in them. And on those days, one would much rather take a walk or visit friends.—This again is a very natural thing. In reality, only the child who is educated by teachers and tutors under the paternal roof, who, if

his instinct leads him to it and it is the wish of his parents, can devote himself at an early age to the serious and profitable cultivation of the art of music, and have the necessary guides for this purpose.

This explains the practical state of inferiority in which even the most highly endowed amateurs find themselves, in comparison with professionals of a very ordinary grade. They totter at the base; they lack the elementary instruction, or they have treated it too lightly, attaching no importance to it, except in the cases described above, which require a rare combination of happy circumstances.

It is here also that may be found, putting aside all idea of a career, the veritable line of demarcation between the professional artist and the amateur artist, the line that seemed to us difficult to define clearly at the beginning of the first chapter: the one has to make art his constant preoccupation, since he must live by it; while the other is only bound to it in an intermittent fashion and according to his caprices; whence it results that, intelligence, gifts and all things being equal, the advantage and superiority will remain with the professional.

To return to our subject, from which I have intentionally wandered a little, it is important to consider, and this will now appear clear, that the advice that I have given above, having in mind unfinished artists, who feel the need of improving themselves, cannot be addressed to amateurs who find themselves in the same case unless they would be pleased to treat themselves as rigorously as those who have to seek their

means of existence in this art. In my opinion, if they want to continue to cultivate music in the quality of amateurs, they can do better and otherwise.

The amateur instrumentalist seeks only pleasure in art, his own pleasure first and then, by extension, the pleasure that he can give to those around him. Now, unless he possesses a great talent and a complete virtuosity, which puts him outside the category which we are studying here, and, moreover, necessitates a considerable discussion, there does not exist, either for him or for those with whom he is pleased to share his pleasures, any artistic satisfaction comparable to that, or to all those, that may be derived from a veritable skill in reading, I mean here expert reading, intrepid reading, that is frightened by nothing.

For every society man or woman, who already plays the piano fairly well, particularly the women, the men having generally less leisure, this so desirable talent can be obtained much more easily than may be imagined. It is quite sufficient to pursue this with a perseverance pushed to obstinacy, *setting aside all other aims*. By this means, one may be certain of succeeding, in a greater or less amount of time, in accordance with the degree of individual natural capacity, but success is always infallibly attained, and of this it is well to be thoroughly convinced. As for the means, they are extremely simple, demanding not more than three hours a day of very agreeable work, which however must be regular and uninterrupted; this is an almost indispensable condition of success. First of all, a special arrangement must be made with, I do not say a

professor, but simply a young artist who is a good reader, in whose company the student should read at sight every day for two *consecutive* (important) hours, first four-hands, then on two pianos. This work should be performed even more scrupulously than ever, according to the principles that I have already laid down in detail in the chapter on the Study of Instruments, and of which I will repeat a summary of the principal points: slowly, strictly in time, with the shadings, and never stopping. For each four-hand piece, the first part should be played first and then the second; this is better than the converse, as it allows the melodic memory less chance of coming into play. The repertory for sight-reading should consist principally of classical String Quartets transcribed for four hands, the Symphonies of Haydn and Mozart and later those of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, and all the classical works of these composers or others written or arranged by them for four hands; collections of classics or modern *études* for four hands; then pieces of any style and period whatsoever, even entire scores of Operas or *Opéras-comiques*, transcribed for four hands without the vocal parts (the old Italian and German ones particularly are procurable, nowadays such transcriptions are no longer made); finally, anything that may be desired, provided that it is good music and that it is not too difficult to be read at sight correctly without any great effort.

After some time at this exercise and still continuing it, it will be indispensable to procure a second piano

for the new study that follows: having two scores, vocal and piano, absolutely identical (same edition) of any Opera, we should read at sight the piano part, that is to say the transcription of the orchestral score, on one of the instruments, while on the other piano the artist-tutor plays the vocal parts, which, by the way, is far more difficult than it appears to be, particularly in the *ensembles;* it is understood that he must play the tenor-part in the real octave, not the notes written. Here the repertory is inexhaustible, as it embraces all the operas of the past, present and future. In the Overtures, *Entr'actes* or *Airs de Ballet,* where there are no vocal parts, the tutor must not be idle; he should double the bass or the principal melodic designs, improvize any part of reinforcement, or beat the time like an orchestral conductor; in fact, preserve in some manner his part of commander. At first, the scores should be selected, naturally, from those that are clearest and easiest, and the greatest care should be taken that the progressive difficulty of them should be perfectly graduated, not letting ourselves be carried away by the temptation to read prematurely more attractive but too difficult works, from which floundering would result.

Of course, when the student is capable of it, these pleasures may be varied; pieces specially written for two pianos may be even read at sight; but it must be remembered that they are generally written for *virtuosi.* For works for two pianos, one should first read the second piano part, and afterwards the first, inversely to what we have said for the pieces for four

hands. Reasons for acting otherwise do not exist here, for generally the first piano part contains more difficulties.

As I have already said, four-hand sight-reading should not be abandoned. One of the two *consecutive* hours may be reserved for the latter, and the other devoted to the reading of two piano scores. The third hour, which should be separated from the others, will be devoted to mechanical work: scales, exercises and studies of medium difficulty, which can even be always the same if desired. It is no less necessary than the two others.

The basis of the system, be it understood, is *never* to read at sight alone; to have *always* a solid support, which never allows the slightest time for stopping or beginning again. It is therefore necessary to choose for these functions of a clockwork pendulum only an artist who is an excellent musician and endowed with an impeccable feeling for rhythm.

By proceeding thus conscientiously and not neglecting the slightest detail, not even the hour of mechanical work, I maintain that any amateur will rapidly become a perfect reader. By rapidly, I mean in a few years.

We must not be astonished nor discouraged if at first progress is slow and almost inappreciable. It is generally thus. On the other hand, when once the gear is well started, progress marches with giant's strides, astonishing even to oürselves.

An excellent auxiliary, be it understood, would be Chamber-Music and the *ensemble* lesson; but not at

the beginning,—only when a certain sureness has been acquired.

The kind of talent thus acquired, I repeat, is certainly by far the most agreeable of all for an amateur pianist of intelligence. What would be the use of his aiming at high perfection and an irreproachable finish and what great pleasure would he gain from it? On the contrary, the study of sight-reading, so seductive in itself, since it bestows the knowledge of so many things, brings everything within our reach in every class of music, for, outside of the profusion of great and beautiful things inspired by the piano, there does not exist a single masterpiece, so to speak, that has not been transcribed for it, often indeed in many different ways. Moreover, this is the most sociable species of talent, the one that will always be most appreciated in society, the one that best enables us to make ourselves agreeable to everybody. Still further, and this is an eminently precious thing, it is the one species of talent that is never lost; even after several years of interruption, we shall recover it intact, since a few weeks of training at most is demanded to get it all back.

He who has become a brilliant reader by employing the procedure that I have indicated, will find that he has acquired at the same time a good share of the qualities that constitute the best accompanist; a little custom will do the rest. If it pleases him to add to this the study of transposition, the principles of which may be learned in a few hours, and afterwards require only practice, he will thereby acquire consid-

erable prestige among singers. And if he has a sufficiently perspicacious mind to know how to use his ability as a reader, by keeping abreast with all that appears, with the new opera, and has a good enough memory to retain by heart its principal fragments, and the ballet, if he does all this simply and without pretension, with grace and good humour, he will soon become the favourite of the drawing-rooms where music is held in honour.

In the same order of ideas, every amateur who has some little voice, should, if this voice is true, consider it a duty to cultivate it, not with a view to singing grand arias, which does not always escape ridicule, but to be able on every occasion to take a part without singing out of tune in a vocal *ensemble*, to read a score at sight in company with a pianist who is a good reader, and all without awkwardness in seeking the notes by picking with one finger in the treble of the piano, but with such ease and certainty that the result is as great a pleasure for himself as for his partner and for an audience of intimate friends. This is a result that is easily attainable by any young girl who has some notions of music, and one that will often find its application.

The amateur who plays any other instrument than the piano should also always set highest the qualities of a reader but less absolutely, because he cannot hope for the same intellectual enjoyments; a score cannot be read on the violin. In compensation, it is

just to consider that the effort is infinitely less for him and only exacts a little will and perseverance.

Nevertheless, if he wishes to work seriously and specially at sight-reading, he can procure an accompanist, whose mission will be never to allow him to stop or hesitate, and with whom he will proceed very nearly as we have indicated above for the pianist. But this is not at all indispensable for him. He would do far better to initiate himself into the mysteries of the String-Quartet, in which, after having passed the inevitable trials and liberated himself from the awkwardness that must always be gone through at the beginning, he will find one of the noblest and most delightful pleasures that the cultivation of the art of music can afford.

## III. The String-Quartet

Of all forms of composition, the String-Quartet is the only one that presents the peculiarity of never admitting any kind of padding or accompaniment. Each of its four parts is concerted, that is to say that each possesses its own individual interest, equal to that of the three others; and if all produce solidarity with regard to the effect of the whole, yet each preserves its liberty and personality for the interpretation of the thousand details with which the work swarms. This is the reason that the intellectual pleasure experienced in executing a work thus conceived cannot be compared to any other pleasure of interpretation, the intensity of which it is almost impossible to imagine

without having tasted it. Another peculiarity resulting from the same cause, is that the sum of the pleasure of the interpreters is infinitely superior to what they can communicate to their hearers, for they alone can penetrate into the interior of the work, comprehending its intimate structure, touching the wheels and making them move, and experiencing the strange sensation of themselves forming a part of it, identifying themselves with it and giving life to it.

It is a little like Whist; I beg pardon if this somewhat brutal comparison is ill chosen, having never touched a card in my life; but it seems to me that even those who know the game take less interest in following a hand than is experienced by the partners who are playing it.

Nevertheless, hearing this kind of music strongly captivates some amateurs, witness Napoleon Bonaparte, better known as a general than as a *dilettante*, remarking to the celebrated violinist Baillot that for himself, from the very first notes, a Quartet takes hold of you, absorbs you, and "changes the disposition of the soul in an instant." *

In order to make the interest belonging to this study, which is worthy of every elevated mind, better appreciated, I think I should not resist the desire to cite *in extenso* several paragraphs from a little work in which this question is treated by a master hand.

"Two Violins, a Viola and a Violoncello! But let us not be deceived; this little orchestra contains within itself a mysterious power that one would hardly sup-

* Bonaparte, premier Consul, à la Malmaison.

pose. These four voices are at once four spirits that sing, talk, dispute, or agree, according to the influence that dominates them.

"To the *first violin* belongs the choice and responsibility of the movement, the indication of the general character of the work and the initiative of the phrase. All of these are conditions on which depends essentially the moral and material effect of the Quartet as a whole.

"He must, like an orchestral conductor, dominate the others, hurrying them along or holding them back, but yet being always ready to abdicate at any required moment and take up the part of accompanist. Without this suppleness of authority on the part of the first violin, a quality much rarer than is thought, the Quartet is no longer a conversation, but turns very quickly into a quarrel, in which, led away by the example of the leader, each player, crushing, overwhelming and dominating his neighbour, egotistically triumphs over the ruins of the work!

"The *second violin*, the natural confidant of the first, notwithstanding its modest *rôle*, is called upon at a moment's notice to dominate the musical conversation in his turn. This part, formerly played upon a much larger instrument than the French * violin used by the first violin, and of a less brilliant tone, was easily distinguishable in the *ensemble;* but today the tone of the two instruments being identical, infinitely more tact and discretion are required from the player to keep this part in its place, and greater

* An interesting and little known detail.

attention from the listener, in order to follow this delicate part which alternately appears and disappears according as it is entrusted with an interesting figure or with a secondary accompaniment.

"As for the *viola*, or *alto*, this part in the Quartet is entirely conciliatory; tuned a fifth lower than the violin, it seems, by the very nature of this accord, brought here to bind the shrillness of the violin with the deep tones of the bass. Its sweet and expressive voice participates in the roundness of the one and the lightness of the other, while perfectly preserving its individual *timbre*. To it are confided those notes whose plaintive sensibility cannot be translated by the dominating voice of the violin nor the firm power of the bass; it seems to be to the Quartet what the bassoon is to the Orchestra. How many examples might be cited in which this instrument seems to have inspired the phrase entrusted to it for rendering!

"Lastly comes the *violoncello*, which presents itself under the double aspect of the low bass of accompaniment, as Haydn uses it in a great number of his Quartets, or a singing part embracing the entire compass of the diapason, and as fully entrusted with passages as the other voices of the Quartet, as Mozart and Beethoven have treated it, and all the modern composers with them. It is upon this part that the harmonic edifice rests, as if it were the keystone of the arch, and its importance in giving assurance to the Quartet modulations, etc., almost equals that of the violin. . . .

"From the modest amateur Quartet to the most

brilliant interpretation that a skilful artist can effect before a large audience that he charms and instructs, the pleasure of the Quartet presents itself under many different aspects and in very different degrees. Let us say, however, that the best condition for the enjoyment of this kind of music is in the intimacy whose charm is so well allied to the natural and the simple which the masters whom we have cited knew how to preserve." *

Its name defines it: *chamber-music.* " This it is that leaves to the executant, with liberty of choice, abandon, the unexpected, spontaneity and self-forgetfulness in the work. This it is also that permits us to play without any mental reservation of certain beauties in which science dominates and which we might often fear to compromise in the presence of a too numerous audience." * Let us add: or an audience containing some profane individuals, for really, to give all your heart and soul to a performance of this nature, and seeing in front of you only indifferent or bored faces is suffering; it freezes you.

Returning to our lover of a stringed instrument, and to the means by which such an artistic satisfaction is accessible to him, apparently the simplest course is to form a group of two violinists and a 'cellist, all three amateurs knowing how to use their instruments, and to hire as professor and guide a good violinist who is accustomed to and experienced in chamber-music. Each of the amateur violinists can play alternately the second violin and the viola, unless each prefers to keep

* Eugène Sauzay, *Étude sur le Quatuor* (1861.)

constantly to the same part, which is perhaps more reasonable to begin with. When he feels strong enough, the second violin can also take the place of the first from time to time, in order to get accustomed to the command; the 'cellist alone remains riveted to his instrument. In this way, one or two regular meetings a week can be organized, between which each can read his part and study the difficult passages. It is not a bad thing to have some substitutes and supernumeraries, so that the meeting can still be held on the day when one of the members happens to be absent. This also makes it possible to have Quintets occasionally. The materials for this study are certainly not lacking, for, without mentioning the most recent works, we find as a basis, Haydn, seventy-six Quartets; Mozart, ten Quartets and ten Quintets; Beethoven, six Trios, seventeen Quartets, and three Quintets. Then there are also Boccherini, Onslow, Mendelssohn, etc., and the moderns.

Begun coldly and almost like a mere trial, this study will take hold of you and captivate you in a singular way; four ardent artists, understanding to what height the philosophy of music may ascend, accustomed to play together, mutually to support and to reply to each other, " forming but one soul and penetrating together into those mysterious beauties, raise themselves and their hearers into the highest regions of art. Such is the charm of the Quartet, which nothing can explain so well as itself." *

It seems to me superfluous to insist any further

* Eugène Sauzay, *Étude sur le Quatuor* (1861.)

upon this. I will add only that the amateur who is well broken into the difficulties of the String-Quartet will be perfectly at his ease in every kind of *ensemble* music, especially at the piano, which will permit him, while procuring therefrom new artistic delights, to render himself useful and agreeable in many circumstances.

## IV. The Dilettante

As for the amateur composer, we will not devote a special paragraph to him, because he is subject to the same laws as the artist; and, truth to tell, there is no real difference between them. The public has no reason to be more indulgent to one than to the other.

But we will say a few words about a very particular and rather large class of amateurs: those who do not know how to compose, sing, or play any instrument at all; and who, not even trying to do so, are none the less sensitive to the beauties of music, greedily seek opportunities to hear them, know how to judge and appreciate them at their real worth, and are really fine connoisseurs, to the same extent as lovers of painting or sculpture, who, generally speaking at least, not painting nor modelling themselves, turn naturally to collecting. They may be defined as the *dilettante* type,* those who delight in the admiration and passionate contemplation of a work of art.

These are perhaps the happiest of all; although, or because they are perfectly selfish. They somewhat re-

* From the Italian, *Dilettare*, *délecter*, *delight*.

semble the Orientals, who do not understand why we should take the trouble of dancing ourselves, when it is so easy to watch somebody else frisking before us. Yes, he is indeed the happiest, since he shares in all the joys of the artist and knows only by hearsay the miseries and painful side of the career, not even the little troubles of an inferior and secondary order which the militant-amateurs have to encounter.

If, however, the *dilettante* desires still to increase his share of contemplative pleasures, he can do so by enlarging his erudition, by simply reading good æsthetic works, and by a deep study of musical history and the lives of the great musicians, which will make him understand them in a more intimate and complete manner.

To know how to listen intelligently, without losing anything, is a veritable art; an art that has to be learned and has its value. "Everybody hears, but few listen, and a still smaller number comprehend. It is safe to say that the conditions for perfect hearing are as numerous as complicated; and so much more difficult to fulfil since they exact a kind of self-abnegation. A listener who is attentive, educated without pedantry, without prejudice either of admiration or repugnance, sensitive and sympathetic to the beauties of the work, entering into the spirit of the performer so as to stimulate his eloquence, listening attentively for himself without imposing his ideas upon others, enthusiastic and discreet, is, from the point of view that we are considering, a perfect musician, a rare type which alone can be produced by a

happy mixture of instinct and experience." * Therefore, as we see, he is highly appreciated by true artists.

But a duty incumbent upon him is to show himself always affable, gracious and kind towards those to whom he is indebted for so many elevated pleasures, and who work to procure them for him; he owes them aid and protection quite as much as esteem and friendship. It is only thus that he may obtain pardon for his sybaritism.

And if it happens that he gets the idea of working in his turn, one day taking up the pen of a critic, which unfortunately is forbidden to nobody, it should be with the most extreme circumspection, and only for the sake of showing his personal impressions to others without ever trying to impose them upon anybody, and abstaining systematically from the abuse of those technical terms which he does not fail to use, with a comical conviction, entirely incorrectly. Jules Janin has said, I do not know exactly where, that " Every man who meddles with criticism without having produced anything is a dishonest man." This is excessive. That he has produced nothing would not be detrimental; but it is necessary that he should possess the sum of the value and the knowledge of those who produce and whom he pretends to judge; as Voltaire, Proud'hon and La Bruyère, who can scarcely be suspected of having consciously agreed, have peremptorily established. One can accept the judgment of his equals and superiors only; and this is what would render it notorious presumption on the part

* Eugène Sauzay, *Étude sur le Quatuor* (1861).

of a *dilettante* to pose as a professor of art and to formulate advice as to what people should do; but if he knows how to limit himself, considering himself, with some reason, as the representative of the *élite* of the public, its most intelligent portion, guiding the great mass of this same public towards the works or the artists that are the objects of his greatest admiration, then he will render service to art and do estimable work. By keeping himself within these just limits, not only in his writings but also in his speech, he can contribute in his sphere of action to the development of *dilettanteism*, and favour the expansion of art by this very course to an appreciable extent.

It seems that we have thoroughly examined all the cases that may present themselves among amateurs whose studies have been insufficient or incomplete. There still remains one more, however, perhaps the most interesting of all, often also a very sad one, which it would be prudent always to foresee. The reader divines it. How often we see a man or woman of the world, more often a woman, sometimes indeed a young girl, obliged by some reverse of fortune to seek some resource, temporarily or permanently, in the exercise of an art that has never been studied except in the quality of an amateur?

It is here particularly that the inconvenience of superficial studies is sadly felt, as also the danger of family and social adulations. The individual believed himself or herself to be the possessor of real talent, accepted all the compliments as sterling, took pleasure in deceiving himself as to his proper value,—

and on the day when the necessity arose of making use of it, he saw it all vanish in smoke. Shall he launch out as a *virtuoso?* That is the first thing thought of, because it is the most brilliant and the most lucrative, when success is with us, but the examination is not a long one. It very soon becomes evident that he possesses nothing that is needed, and least of all the repertory, the qualities of endurance, solidity and assurance which can only result from long training. That is the first deception. Quite naturally, the next thought is of teaching. But to be a teacher, scholars are needed; and to attract scholars, unless we can make ourselves heard and applauded, we must be able at least to give some proof in some way of our qualifications for teaching, or show pupils already formed; but, in order to show them, we must have some! Then, distressed and disillusioned, he turns in a fruitless circle, from which only a happy chance, upon which he must not count too much, can deliver him. He thought he had a tool in his hand, and it was only a plaything.

For this sad state of things, I do not know any remedy.

But there exists one means of avoiding this, which I have already hinted at, and this is to be trained for teaching in advance. I know personally, which makes me suppose that the case is not very rare, several fine examples of young women of the best society, having what is called "a fine amateur talent," and whose position with regard to fortune seems to be, as far as is possible, sheltered against all eventuali-

ties, who devote several hours every day, gratuitously, of course, to the musical instruction of young boys or girls whose parents could not pay for the luxury of an accomplishment. Some give them courses in *solfeggio,* often quite numerous; others *give* in the true meaning of the word, piano lessons; and there are others who teach singing, the violin, or the harp, and, far from keeping to the elementary stage, conduct their pupils quite far.

Do they do this from a sentiment of pure charity? We may be permitted to doubt it, for their scholars do not belong for the most part to the indigent class, but are recruited rather from the lower middle class. In doing this, however, they accomplish an unquestionably beneficent act which it would be bad taste to disparage, for they give these children access to a class of studies which may lead them to a career which would remain closed to them without this intervention.

Do they do this with an idea of calculation and foresight into the future and the sorry surprises that it may have in store for them? I do not know, having never asked them about it; but where would be the harm?

What is very certain is that whatever their incentive may be, there is nothing here but what is essentially honourable; and if the days of adversity should come, they will find themselves quite differently armed for the struggle from those who have never done anything to prepare for it; for not only will they have thus acquired the experience of teaching,

upon the importance of which we have already insisted under all circumstances, so that there is no need to return to it here, but they have the means of justifying their qualifications for teaching by the exhibition of the results obtained, by making their little pupils heard, which is the best of all diplomas and ought to aid them strongly in recruiting from those about them the nucleus of a little following.

And if they should never need to have recourse to this resource, which I hope may be so, they will be rewarded in another way for the sacrifice that they have made of their time and trouble. One never knows anything so well as that which one has tried to teach to others; and by this benevolent practice of teaching they will see their own talent develop and acquire quite an individual solidity and an assurance which is not the usual stamp of amateur talent.

Outside these cases and several others quite as rare, in which by the force of circumstances he is transformed into a veritable artist-militant, the intelligent amateur, whatever his degree of culture may be, and even if in some things he surpasses, or thinks he surpasses certain professionals, would always act in good taste by not trying to rival or enter into contest with them. The artist, on his side, will do well to avoid all occasions which may give rise to comparisons that are unbecoming, as unpleasant for the one as for the other. They should not encounter save with the noble and elevated aim of fraternal collaboration, and with the desire of completing one another and lend-

ing mutual support. An ill-understood and petty antagonism lowers and weakens both, while by remaining each in his own province, or in not associating except with the idea of co-operating in the work of art, they directly attain their common end, which is the contemplation or the production of the Beautiful.

If I have succeeded in making myself well understood up to this point, the reader can now conceive the strict solidarity that should exist between the amateurs and artists who are equally fond of matters of art. The artist's life could not be understood without his desire of being appreciated by the public which is composed of amateurs. On the other hand, the amateur could not exist unless the artist were there to go before and show him the way. But, if their ideal is identical, it is otherwise with the ways and means by which they can or should pursue it. This is why, in the course of this chapter, dealing with the ways of rectifying an imperfect education or of making the best possible use of it, I have had to give different advice for apparently analogous cases, according as they are addressed to one or other of these two categories. It is for everybody to judge for himself in which he should place himself, and to act accordingly, for his pleasure or for his profit, *ad majorem artis gloriam.*

I will only add here for the use of those unfortunate young artists or amateurs who see their studies stopped on account of the impossibility of procuring the advice of a teacher, a hint of a charming method that I have frequently seen succeed and which is

called sympathy: this is the *exchange* of lessons. It is within the reach of everybody, with the exception of the absolutely ignorant,—those who have never learned anything, not even their own language. Really, two things only are necessary for this: first, you must know something, it does not matter what, but something, whether a language, or drawing, or history, or even some branch of music, and this well enough and thoroughly enough to be able to teach it. Then you must try to get into communication, by the aid of mutual friends or relations, or by some other means, even such as advertising in the papers, with some advanced student-musician who is in an analogous though inverse condition, being desirous of acquiring what you are able to teach him. And you may believe that this is not as difficult as one might suppose, for I have seen the exchange of Violin lessons for lessons in Harmony; Piano for Violin; *Solfeggio* for German, and even Mathematics for Counterpoint. I saw one of my pupils frequenting a Fencing-school for three years by giving a little course on the Flute to the master and his assistant; and very recently I saw another, a good harmonist and organist, learning English and Grecian history at the same time by teaching the Organ to a young Englishman, and Harmony to a pupil in the *École Normale;* all concluding to the mutual satisfaction of the contracting parties, who afterwards generally remained excellent friends. This is mutual instruction without opening the purse.

The danger here lies in the inexperience of one or

other of the Student-Professors; to remedy this they will have to make voluntary efforts, and struggle to divine what is incompletely explained to them, and more particularly to have that good faith which consists in recognizing without silly self-conceit when they are wrong. They will also act prudently in not making use of any books for study except those that have been used for their own instruction, and which they are likely to know how to make the best use of; or, if there is any reason why they should have recourse to other methods, these should be chosen with the most suspicious circumspection, and only from those that have been proved and have passed into the rank of classics. In a case of this kind, we should never venture to make experiments; and here more than ever it is important to follow only the best known and most frequented paths. People could scarcely believe the harm that is done to instruction by bad works of enticing titles and full of fallacious promises: *The Violin Learned without a Master; The Piano in Fifteen Lessons; The Art of Composing Brought within the Reach of All;* these are all fool-traps which we must guard against as *pickpockets.* Absolutely nothing can be learned in music without the necessary amount of time, or without a guide,—unless it is the accordion or the ocarina.

## V. Helpful Books and Methods

I had no intention of giving a catalogue of didactic works here; but since several friends have remarked that, particularly in considering the employment of this mutual teaching by novices in pedagogy, without it there would be a gap in a work which aims to be *practical* above everything else, I have drawn up the one that follows. But I must carefully explain its exact scope and intent.

I have attempted to make it a collection of works that by themselves suffice for musical instruction in every branch. I have proceeded as if I were charged with forming economically the nucleus of a scholar's library for the use of some new establishment that intended to train musicians of every kind: Composers, Singers and Instrumentalists.

Therefore, if I have forgotten nothing, as I hope is the case, everybody will find in it what is necessary for starting his studies, and even for carrying them up to a somewhat advanced stage. But I do not at all mean to assert that these are the only works worthy of confidence, nor even that they are the best; this assertion would necessitate a knowledge of every one that has ever been written, and a belief in my own capability of judging them,—two things in which I am equally lacking. My sole intention is to indicate in some measure, for any given field of musical study, at least one work that is serious, complete and conscientiously written, selected from those that I know and whose excellence nobody disputes.

No one will be astonished if I have added a few of my own; it would be strange if after having made them I should think them bad. But I have always been careful to mention similar ones side by side with them, so as not to seem to be advertising my publishers.

For Solfeggio:

Batiste.—*Petit solfége mélodique* (Heugel).
Panseron.—*A B C* (2 volumes) (Hachette).
Panseron.—*Solféges d'artiste* (Hachette).
*Solféges d'Italie.*
*Solféges du Conservatoire.*
Cherubini.—*Solféges* (Ménestrel).
Lavignac.—*Solféges manuscrits* (6 volumes) (Lemoine).
Ambroise Thomas.—*Solfége manuscrit* (2 volumes) (Ménestrel).

There are, as I have said elsewhere, an infinite number of good works on the study of *Solfeggio*, signed Panseron, H. Duvernoy (Leduc and Benoit), Rougnon (Noël and Gallet) between which we are embarrassed in making a choice; the important thing is not to make use of any but those that have a clearly musical and artistic character.

For Ensemble Solfeggio:

Chelard.—*Symphonies vocales à 3 et 4 voix* (*men, women, or children*), a work that is little known, but which is extremely musical (Lemoine).

For Theory:

A. Savard.—*Principes de la musique* (Hachette).

M. Simon.—*Cours complet des principes de la musique* (Mackar).

In these works, which are also abridged for those who only want a superficial knowledge (which is always a mistake), the theory of transposition is also described.

For Dictation:

Lavignac.—*Cours complet de Dictée musicale* (4483 dictations) (Lemoine).

Duvernoy.—200 Dictées, *en deux livres* (Benoit).

For Harmony:

Reber.—*Traité d'Harmonie* (Gallet).

Th. Dubois.—*Notes et études complément indispensable du Traité de Reber* (Heugel).

Fr. Bazin.—*Cours d'Harmonie* (Lemoine).

Of the last two works, Bazin's is the simplest and clearest, as well as the easiest. Reber's, with the addition of Dubois's *Notes*, initiates one much more completely into the combinations of modern harmony.

Th. Dubois.—*87 Leçons d'Harmonie* (Heugel).

A. Barthe.—*90 Leçons d'Harmonie* (Leduc).

Ch. Lenepveu.—*100 Leçons d'Harmonie* (Lemoine).

Lavignac.—*208 Leçons d'Harmonie* (3 volumes) (Lemoine).

For Counterpoint and Fugue:

The most complete and practical work is the last that has appeared:

Th. Dubois.—*Traité de Counterpoint et Fugue* (Heugel, 1901).

Before the appearance of this book, the one used almost exclusively was that of

Cherubini.—*Cours de Counterpoint et Fugue* (Heugel).

From the point of view of erudition or archæological research, it is well to read the treatises of Fux (1660), Marpurg (1754), and Albrechtsberger (1790).

For the study of Musical Form:

Hugo Riemann.—*History of Musical Forms.* (One of a series of Musical Catechisms.)

Jadassohn.—*Der Lehre vom Kanon und von der Fuge* (Berlin, 1884).

*Die Forman in den Werken der Tonkunst analysiert* (1885).

For Orchestration:

Gevaert.—*Traité d'Instrumentation* (Lemoine).

Gevaert.—*Cours méthodique d'orchestration* (Lemoine).

Berlioz.—*Grand Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration moderne* (Lemoine).

Guiraud.—*Traité pratique d'orchestration.* (Durand-Schoenwerk), a charming little elementary work and yet very complete.

For the Military Orchestra:

Gabriel Parès.—*Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration militaires* (Lemoine).

There are little elementary methods for all the wind instruments by the same author.

For Musical Acoustics:

Tyndall.—*Lectures on Sound* (London, 1867).

Helmholtz.—*Sensations of Tone.* Translated by Ellis (London, 1875).

For the study of the History of Music:

Félix Clément.—*Histoire de la musique* (Hachette).

H. Lavoix fils.—*Histoire de la musique* (Quantin).

Fétis.—*Biographie des musiciens* (8 volumes) (Firmin-Didot).

A. Pougin.—*Supplément à l'ouvrage précédent.*

Gevaert.—*Histoire et Théorie de la musique grecque* (Ghent, 1875-1881).

Lavoix et Lemaire.—*Histoire du Chant* (Heugel).

Lavignac.—*La musique et les musiciens* (Delagrave), a work which is a sort of encyclopædic *résumé* of all knowledge useful to musicians.

Musical Dictionaries:

Hugo Riemann.—*Musik Lexikon* (1882; English ed., 1893-'6).

Paul Rougnon.—*Dictionnaire musicale des locutions étrangères usitées en musique* (Paul Dupont).

For Singing:

M. Garcia.—*Traité complet de l'Art du chant* (Heugel).

J. Faure.—*La Voix et le Chant* (Ménestrel).

Crosti.—*Le Gradus du Chanteur* (Girod).

Duprez.—*Méthode complète du Chant* (Heugel).

Delle-Sedie.—*L'Art lyrique* (Leduc).

For Hygiene of the Voice:

Dr. Mandl.—*Hygiène de la voix* (1879).

Dr. Castex.—*Hygiène de la voix parlée et chantée* (1894). (Gauthier-Villars.)

For the Piano:

There are a multitude of excellent methods that everybody knows; I mention only two, which do not seem to me to be known as much as they deserve:

Louis Koehler, op. 80.—*Méthode de piano avec explications théoriques et pratiques, et plus de 100 exercises et morceaux originaux* (Siegel à Leipzig).

Villoing (who was Rubinstein's teacher).—*École pratique du piano* (Heugel).

Stamaty (who was Saint-Saëns's teacher).—*Le Rhythm des doights* (Ménestrel).

Czerny.—The whole collection of his exercises for every degree (Leduc, Costallat, etc.).

J. B. Cramer.—*Études* (2 volumes) (Lemoine).

Clementi.—*Gradus ad Parnassum* (3 volumes) (Richault).

J. Seb. Bach.—*The Well-Tempered Clavier* (2 volumes).

Moscheles.—*Études* (Benoit).

Hummel.—*Études* (Costallat).

Stephen Heller.—*Études* (10 volumes) (Maho, Lemoine, etc.).

Chopin.—*Études* (2 volumes) (Lemoine).

Liszt.—*Études after Paganini* (Breitkoff & Härtel, Leipzig; Costallat, Paris).

For Reading (4 hands):

Marmontel.—*L'art de déchiffrer* (elementary) (Heugel).

Lemoine.—*École de la mesure et de la ponctuation* (Lemoine).

For the Harp:

R. Martenot.—*Méthode de Harpe* (Enoch).

For the Organ:

Lemmens.—*École d'orgue* (Schott).

Cl. Loret.—*Cours d'orgue en 4 livres* (Loret et Freytag).

J. Seb. Bach.—*Préludes and fugues for the organ.*

Mendelssohn.—*Six Organ Sonatas* (Peters).

For the Harmonium:

Lefébure-Wély.—*Méthode pour l'harmonium* (Parvy).

For the Violin:

De Beriot. — *Méthode élémentaire de Violin* (Schott).

Baillot.—*L'art du Violin* (Heugel).

Kreutzer.—*40 Études* (Peters).

Fiorillo.—*36 Caprices* (Peters).

Rode.—*24 Caprices* (Peters).

Campagnoli.—*Divertissements à toutes les positions* (Litolff).

For the Viola:

Bruni.—*Méthode pour l'Alto Viola* (Enoch).

Martinn.—*Nouvelle méthode d'Alto* (Costallat).

For the Violoncello:

Baudiot.—*Grande méthode de Violoncelle* (Costallat).

Romberg.—*Méthode complète de Violoncelle* (Costallat).

Chevillard.—*Méthode complète de Violoncelle* (Costallat).

Rabaud.—*Méthode complète de Violoncelle* (Costallat).

For the Double-Bass:

Labro.—*Méthode de Contrebasse* (Gallet).

Gouffé.—*Traité sur la Contrebasse* (Costallat).

Bottesini, G. de.—*Méthode complète de Contrebasse* (Ricordi).

For the Flute:

Berbiguier.—*Méthode complète pour la Flute* (Cotelle).

Quantz.—*Versuch einer Anweisung, die Flöte traversière zu spielen* (1752).

For the Oboe:

Brod.—*Méthode de hautbois* (Lemoine).

Verroust.—*Méthode pour le hautbois* (Costallat).

For the Clarinet:

Beer.—*Méthode complète de clarinette* (Leduc).

Klosé.—*Méthode pour clarinette* (Leduc).

For the Bassoon:

Cokken.—*Méthode de basson* (Leduc).

Brémond.—*Exercises et arpèges* (Evette).

For the Horn:

Dauprat.—*Méthode de cor* (Lemoine)—French horn.

Brémond.—*Exercises* (Leduc)—Valve horn.

For the Trumpet:

Dauverné.—*Méthode pour la Trompette* (Millereau)—simple Trumpet.

Guilbaut.—*Méthode pour la Trompette à pistons* (Margueritat)—Trompette à pistons.

For the Cornet à Pistons:

Forestier.—*Méthode complète théorique et pratique pour le cornet à pistons* (Bernard Latte).

Arban.—*Méthode de Cornet et de Saxhorn* (Leduc).

For the Trombone:

Dieppo.—*Méthode complète pour le Trombone* (Joubert)—Trombone à coulisses.

Delisse.—*Opuscule Rudimentaire et classique* (Millereau)—Trombone à pistons.

Wherever possible, I have added the name of the publisher, in order to facilitate search in book-shops and to avoid confusion. When no name is given, it is because the work in question is a classic that belongs to the public, of which many editions exist and which is easy to find.

# PART VI

## VARIOUS KINDS OF INSTRUCTION: INDIVIDUAL, CLASS AND CONSERVATORY INSTRUCTION

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### I. Private Teaching

It now remains for us to consider for the last time Musical Instruction in its entirety, but from a different point of view from all that has gone before.

One of the most serious questions must in fact present itself to parents who want their children to study music, as it will later to the pupils themselves, when they have reached an age at which they can themselves decide upon the guidance of their studies. It is this: of the two kinds of teaching: individual or in classics, which should be chosen? Or, what is merely the same question put differently, which produces the best result with an equal sum of effort or money expended? Here a distinction must be made.

In principle, we may reply that *private teaching* is the best for learning an instrument, or learning singing, which comes to the same thing, the voice having to be considered, in all that concerns musical

studies, as nothing but a living instrument. The reason is simply that the teacher has not so much time, as is customary devoted to a private lesson, to observe his pupil carefully, to look out for his faults, to try to develop his good qualities, to give him appropriate examples, to make him understand and repeat these and to be engrossed with him exclusively without any outside foreign preoccupations to disturb him; also because, to tell the truth, two pupils absolutely alike do not exist, and it can never be proper to treat both exactly in the same way, nor with identical means.

## II. Class Instruction

On the other hand, the *classes* are preferable in all that concerns pure technique, that is to say, Solfeggio, Theory, Dictation, Transposition, Harmony, Counterpoint, Fugue, Composition, everything, in short, whose rules or immutable laws are invariably the same for all, and have nothing to do with the character, or special qualities of each individual, which should, on the contrary, outside of these rules, and especially in all that concerns Composition, preserve its independence and individuality.

I think it may be useful to enter into a few details regarding other reasons which make me prefer class teaching in each of these branches of musical technique.

*Solfeggio:* a pupil cannot sol-fa for a whole hour at a time, it would be much too fatiguing; but he can

thoroughly profit by a *Course of Solfeggio* that lasts two hours by taking interest in the work of the other pupils and in following the music, when he himself is not singing. We may even conclude *à priori* that the largest classes are also likely to be the best, for they permit of ensemble *solfeggio* of several parts, one of the most perfect studies that exists for expanding the musical intelligence and perfecting the education of the ear.

*Theory:* this is spoken instruction, which can be given at the table (and there it is also accomplished the best), followed by questions or problems for the pupil to solve in writing.

*Dictation:* exactly the same time is required to give dictation, whether the pupils number one or hundreds. So it wastes the time of a teacher and gives him useless fatigue when he is required to give individual dictation, and is of extra advantage to nobody.

*Transposition:* the same reasons hold as for Solfeggio and Theory, whether the exercise is in transposition by reading, or by singing at the piano, or whether it is done by writing; nearly as much is learned by seeing it done, by watching intelligently, of course.

*Harmony:* here the motives of my predilection are of quite another nature: there is an advantage in being able to compare our own work with that of our comrades, whether their standing is absolutely abreast of our own, or ahead, or even behind (without too great a difference, however). This develops judgment and the spirit of analysis; but, contrarily to

what we have said regarding *Solfeggio,* there is no advantage here in the class being large; from four to ten pupils is well enough, that is a good proportion, for it is necessary for every one frequently to have a finger in the pie.

*Counterpoint:* the same considerations hold good here as for harmony, but in a much higher degree. It is at least as instructive to see the faults in the work of fellow-pupils sought for, and to participate in this search, to criticize, and to take sides for or against a certain interpretation of strict rules of this severe species of composition, as it is to see the work that we ourselves have written, minutely examined and dissected.

*Fugue and Composition:* here, again, my motives are of a new order. Nobody can be sure of producing any composition, fugue or anything else, by a certain day and hour appointed. We must wait for the inspiration, or, if that word seems too big, wait until we are in the mood, till the idea arrives. Under these conditions, how can an individual lesson be set for a fixed day and hour? It may very well happen that we have nothing ready; or, on the contrary, we hurry, and carry in only a bad piece of work, a patched-up task that is too hasty, and devoid of interest. In a class, on the contrary, among the whole number of pupils, there will be one or two who will have produced something, and that something, whatever it is, will be sufficient to furnish material for the lesson, and at least serve as a point of departure.

Then a lesson in composition is first of all a dis-

cussion about æsthetics, sometimes indeed a debate, a conversation and an exchange of ideas, and there is no reason why it should be addressed to a single person.

Such are the motives that lead me to find class-teaching superior to individual teaching in everything that relates to general technique, from the beginning to the end, while preserving a marked preference for individual teaching in all that concerns the study of singing, or of any instrument.

Now we must examine the exceptional cases, which do not seem to me excessively numerous.

The first that comes into my mind is that of a very backward pupil, who needs to be fed by double mouthfuls and to receive numerous explanations. For the latter, the private lesson is necessarily imperative, whatever the branch of study may be. It is the same with one who, on account of his other work, has only a little time to spare; it is also the same with a pupil whose studies have a faulty foundation, which forces us to go back frequently, to consolidate incomplete ideas,—a thing that is inadmissible in a class. Again in the case of a slow pupil (which does not mean that he makes bad progress, therefore those are often the ones that best assimilate the precepts that are taught to them patiently) who would hinder his comrades whose progress is normal. In all these cases and in all those where the pupil is not found under ordinary conditions, the private lesson, it stands for itself, is the one to be recommended.

More delicate is the position of a pupil afflicted with

extreme timidity. If our aim is particularly to vanquish this timidity, it seems that the class, with its inevitable promiscuous intercourse, is the self-evident remedy; but if we want above all else to obtain rapid progress, notwithstanding this timidity, we shall more easily succeed by means of frequent lessons by a teacher who knows how to inspire confidence. It is a ticklish problem.

Perhaps, in this case, the two systems might be tried alternately.

I see that I have forgotten to speak here of the study of chamber-music. For this, there are two different courses; one special to pianists, the other preferable for instrumentalists in general.—It is always an advantage for the pianist to begin with a certain number of private lessons in order to acquire flexibility, the qualities of abnegation, renunciation of personal effect and that very special sentiment of courteous condescension which constitutes one of the most delightful and elegant charms of this kind of music, to become, in a measure, sociable and get rid of the habit of too great independence. But just as soon as this end is nearly attained, the class is better and more profitable for him; there the pupil works with his fingers but a part of the time, it is true, but he listens as at an instructive concert, for, as we have already said, one of the great attractions of this study is the magnificence and the multiplicity of the masterpieces with which the greatest composers have endowed the library of instrumental ensemble music. As it is impossible for the student to play everything

himself, he should endeavour to hear as much as possible and to furnish his mind.—For the other instrumentalists, they can instantly take their part in the class, without inconvenience, but they must be in complete possession of the mechanism of their instruments, and be good enough readers to read their part at sight very fluently and without the least difficulty, which is not generally demanded of pianists, and could not be reasonably required of them, their part being infinitely greater than the others.

Such are, to my mind, the motives which should determine the preference, according to the circumstances, and when we have absolute freedom of choice for class teaching or for private teaching.

Each has its own advantages, and it is by thoroughly understanding these that the reader will be able to complete the above sketch for each particular case.

But another coefficient must also be taken into serious consideration when the question arises of choosing a system of instruction, and even, in certain cases, it must prevail over all preceding considerations; this is the ability of the teacher.

In reality, if, in any of the branches for which we have recognized the superiority of private lessons, there should be found some eminent teacher, who, for reasons connected with his method, or his procedure, or simply his habits or propriety, has a marked predilection for classes or collective lessons, and if this teacher inspires confidence in a higher degree than his brethren, it is to him that we must go, and thenceforth

accept his ways without question. If, on the contrary, in one of those cases where teaching in classes seems to us the best, we do not find it practised in our neighbourhood by able masters, while we can obtain private lessons from a very good teacher who does not teach in classes, because he does not like them, preferring the other system, it would be better to renounce the idea of a class and apply to the very good teacher and leave him free to act as he pleases. In a word, the quality of the master should stand above and be placed before all other considerations; and when once we have placed ourselves under his direction, we must leave him the liberty to proceed according to his own will and custom. To try to impose our own ideas upon him would irritate him, without doing any good.

It is only in small localities, or towns of a secondary order, that we can experience such hesitations. In all the great intellectual and artistic centres, there are well-arranged courses, and good teachers abound; the only embarrassment is that of selection, and in that case we can allow ourselves to be guided by such general considerations as the preceding.

Then, in most of the large cities also, there are Conservatories, of which we have not yet spoken, but which constitute a powerful element of expansion in musical instruction for the amateur as well as for the professional.

### III. Conservatory Instruction

Instruction in the Conservatories and other large schools is something quite peculiar to itself. It is collective teaching inasmuch as all the pupils belonging to the same class are united in the same place; it participates in the nature of private teaching, since every pupil receives his personal share of the lesson, even if it is only a few minutes, besides hearing the lesson of his fellow-students, who, likewise, hear his and can derive profit from it. It is not absolutely theoretical, since the explanation of the principles is always accompanied with practice; neither is it principally practical for the same reason; it includes all this, and it is something more besides. Above everything else it is *dogmatic*, and that is its most appropriate qualification. The professor is considered there as impeccable and infallible, what he says must be accepted as an article of faith, and the example that he sets must be servilely imitated. If he is a singer or instrumentalist, he teaches his pupils to sing or play like himself, in his particular manner, to breathe, to pronounce and to hold the bow as he does. He communicates to them something of his own style, and fashions them in his own image; so that when anyone hears one of them he will say without a moment's hesitation: that is a pupil of so-and-so. This is what is called forming a school. I do not mean to say by this that all the pupils are run into the same mould, for this would be a great mistake. When the master is a truly great artist, he knows how

to leave to each what is necessary to constitute individuality, and devotes himself principally to developing the innate qualities; but there remains, notwithstanding, a family resemblance, which, without in the least excluding originality, binds together the members of the same school and makes them recognized as surely as if they bore a trade-mark. This is not a fault, it is quite the contrary, indeed, in the case of a great master. In the matter of composition, with even greater reason, the master inculcates them with his ideas and methods of orchestration, making them share in his admirations or antipathies, while yet having the very sincere general intention of allowing them the greatest latitude, merely preventing them from straying; and, in reality, he often communicates to them, not his genius, which, alas! is untransferable, but much of his method, his talent, his *sleights of hand*, or familiar formulæ. The latter also forms a school, certainly; but the soils upon which his seed is scattered are so varied that in most cases their products present no apparent analogy and do not seem to spring from the same species; so that, even when informed, the trained eye of a professional has great difficulty in recognizing their common origin. In the courses of harmony, counterpoint and fugue, discussions between the scholars are strongly encouraged, each one giving practical examples of points in theory which he pleases to defend or attack, seeking the why and wherefore of the established rules and proposing exceptions or new rules, more or less revolutionary. Often three or four

opinions, about equally tenable, are advanced at the same time; the arguments accumulate on all sides, the texts of treatises are consulted, points of comparison are sought for in the scores of celebrated composers, the result generally being that no one succeeds in convincing his adversaries, who remain more deeply rooted than ever in their first point of view. Then only intervenes the professor, who has listened impartially to everything; he sums up the debate, analyzes the question, weighs the arguments, argues with the pupils in his turn, and finally announces his opinion, which all blindly accept.

This momentary deference will not prevent them later from judging their masters in their turn, rejecting or modifying certain of their doctrines, and, in a word, creating their own system, sometimes a very different one, which is strictly their right and even their duty; for the servile imitation of one style would infallibly lead them to platitude and lack of originality. Moreover, this would be the negation of artistic evolution. It is only on the school benches that this respectful discipline is necessary; afterwards, everyone is free to treat his masters as old fogies, which will not entail any consequences, nor annoy them in the least.

From all this friction, which can only occur in the large official schools and with which private classes, though profitable, as we have already said, cannot be compared, the pupil issues more robust and better armed for the incessant struggle that constitutes the career of a composer. He learns there some-

thing, however little, of the difficulties of the life that he has chosen. Instrumentalists and singers, on their part, generally find in these large establishments all that contributes to the development of their talent and helps them to acquire the serious qualities of a musician, from the classes in *solfeggio* to the *ensemble* classes, whether vocal or instrumental, and finally the orchestra classes in which all the divers elements are found grouped.

The intercourse with a large number of comrades studying the same specialty, the habit of judging them, the fact of following their progress and comparing it with their own, all the lessons being given in common, the facility of meeting and conversing with pupils who have embraced other branches, and belong consequently to other classes, all contribute strongly to developing in the young artist a lot of technical knowledge of which private teaching would never have given him an idea even, and which may be very profitable to him.

Many professors practise that excellent system of mutual teaching which consists in raising several of their best pupils, those of the last year, for example, to the rank of tutors, and in confiding to their care one or several of their young fellow-students, whose monitors they become, and whom they teach how to work, as they themselves have been taught by their seniors, and as their young pupils in their turn will teach those who come after them. This procedure, apart from the charming side it has in making the class a sort of artistic family of which the professor

is the head, and of establishing bonds of reciprocal sympathy, gratitude and solidarity between pupils of the same master, affords the incomparable advantage of teaching the pupil how to teach, and transforms the Conservatory into a normal school of teachers. And this is not a thing to be neglected; for, to be a good teacher, it is not sufficient merely to know one's profession as an artist perfectly and to be capable of giving good examples. One must accustom oneself to presenting things with clearness and method, not using technical terms too often, nor intermingling explanations difficult to grasp with familiar comparisons or images more within the grasp of the young pupils. One must know how to discern whether a subject should be treated exhaustively to-day, or whether it would be better only to graze it and return to it another day. One must have great firmness without allowing it to appear, for in that case it is mistaken for harshness and irritates the pupil. One must know how to let the pupil divine certain things and believe that he has discovered them for himself, sometimes spurring and sometimes restraining him. Teaching is a true art, which is not acquired in a day and into which one is never initiated so well and so quickly as by first practising as a subordinate, under the patronage and responsibility of a serious and experienced master; and it is hard to get this kind of exercise except in a Conservatory, which seems to me the best of all ways, and renders these schools veritable nurseries for teachers, from which the latter are often recruited.

Still another very good feature of these large establishments, whatever may be their denomination—Musical Institute, Academy, whether of official or semi-official character, is that they require, as a final sanction of the studies, Examinations or Competitions at the end of the year, when the worthiest pupils carry off prizes, *accessits*, in fact, *diplomas*, under one form or another.

This of course must not be carried to abuse. How often we have seen one strong in his exercises obtain all the prizes at the College and *Lycée*, and then afterwards, when once launched upon his career, allow himself to be outstripped by the most obscure, by those who seemed to be of all his old comrades the least worthy of consideration. What is true everywhere else is true with us; these prizes and diplomas do not always prove much as to the future. But if we must not overestimate their importance, neither must we scorn them.

We have said elsewhere, at the beginning of this book, that it was difficult to make any difference, with regard to special education, between the amateur and the professional artist; later, however, we have had to establish certain lines of demarcation; there is still another to recognize here. The practical artist must gain his means of existence from his art, in a word, the means of gaining money—the priest must live by the altar—while the amateur, for whom it is a luxury, will more often find it an occasion for spending. If, therefore, it is perfectly legitimate for him who has decided to make art at once his aim

and his means of livelihood to try to gain these diplomas, which will be credentials for him and which will open doors and aid him in making a place for himself, we must regard it as a frivolous satisfaction in those who possess other financial resources. If they have any need of this stimulant, it is because they have not the real love of art, and treat it too much as a simple *sport*. Exception should be made for very young children who have a right to regard music as only a pleasant game of mind and skill, in which they can win or lose; this conception is sufficient for their age. But as soon as it is a question of the higher studies, emulation seems no longer necessary, and it seems to me that encouragement or rewards arising from the contests of pupils should pass into the background and that the true satisfaction of the artist should consist solely in penetrating more and more deeply into the secrets of his art, and in the intimate consciousness that every day he takes a step nearer to perfection, and that he will mount by work and perseverance higher towards the idea of the Beautiful.

### IV. European Conservatories

Without any doubt, Italy was the cradle of the first Conservatories,—very different at first from those of to-day. The most ancient establishment bearing this name of which I have found any certain trace, is the *Conservatorio di Santa Maria di Loreto*, which seems to have been founded in Naples, about 1537, by a learned and also a celebrated Flemish musician

named Jean Tinctoris; then, almost immediately, and certainly before the end of the century, also in Naples, at least three others appeared, the *Conservatorio dei poveri di Gesù Christo*, the *Conservatorio di San Onofrio*, and the *Conservatorio della pietà de Turchini*. These establishments had as much the character of refuges, asylums, orphanages and hospitals as of schools strictly speaking; however, in these, music was taught to the children who seemed to show some aptitude, just as they were taught any other trade, with the aim of giving them a means of providing for their living. It was thus that one of these houses, directed by the Jesuit Fathers, supplied the whole region with strolling and begging musicians; it was called the *Conservatorio dei pauperi scoli*, the Conservatory of the Poor.

Such was their origin; they were therefore pious and philanthropical foundations.

Since that time, Conservatories have greatly multiplied in Italy and throughout the entire world. Finding myself in possession of some official data regarding many of the most celebrated and important ones, I think it may be of interest for me to inform the reader of their workings, without vouching absolutely for the small details of a secondary order, which, moreover, may be modified from year to year by a simple revision of rules or statutes. Such as it is, although brief and often incomplete, this information will at any rate give the general aspect of the teaching of music in the majority of civilized countries, and may be useful under many circumstances.

Taking, then, Italy for our starting-point, we will first mention the Conservatory of Rome, dependent upon the Academy of St. Cecelia (1566), an establishment of the greatest importance, notwithstanding the relatively restricted number of its pupils, about 200, who receive the advice of 35 professors, all of the first rank. To gain admission, an application must be sent in from September 1 to October 20, the age must be 9 years at the *minimum* and 11 to 22 years at the *maximum*, according to the classes, and proofs must be furnished of the capacity for the course that is desired. If at the end of a year, the pupil does not appear to possess the aptitude required, and if it is recognized that he has no chance of success, he is struck off the rolls.

At the Conservatory of St. Cecelia, an establishment subsidized by the government, and the most celebrated in Italy, the pupils first pay an admission fee of 15 *lire*, and afterwards an annual fee of 60 *lire*. The teaching, which is very complete, comprises the following branches: *

Composition,† counterpoint, harmony, *solfeggio* and theory; singing, ensemble choral; piano, organ, harp, and all the instruments of the classic orchestra,‡ trombone, and per-

* For the state of clearness, I adopt here a uniform order in the nomenclature of the classes of similar establishments: Technical and theoretical studies; singing; dramatic studies; instrumental studies; literary and scientific studies, and the study of languages.

† In many schools the word "composition" includes the study of form and of orchestration.

‡ I mean by this, in abridging these names, the fundamental instruments of the orchestra in the days of Haydn, Mozart, and

cussion instruments; history of music, æsthetics of music, rights and duties. (According to the annual schedule, the following additional courses may be undertaken: Declamation and gesture, history and geography, musical paleography, dramatic and poetic literature, arithmetic, Latin, French, Italian, and other living languages.)

At the Royal Conservatory of Naples (1537), also supported by the State, and possessing additional revenues, there are several categories: day-scholars who pay $12 per annum, from which the needy are exempt; boarders who have to pay $36 entrance fee and $80 per annum; and there are other boarders, called gratuitous, who pay only the entrance fee.

One can be admitted from the age of 9, except for the singing-classes, in which the age of 16 is the least required for women, and 17 for men; a good physical constitution and a certificate of study are required; moreover, an elementary proof of aptitude for the chosen class must be furnished. There are every year about 300 pupils distributed among 36 professors.

Composition, counterpoint, and harmony, military instrumentation, *solfeggio* and theory; singing; scenic art; piano, organ,* harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, and trombone; ensemble for piano and instruments, for quartet, and for wind-instruments; history of

Beethoven: violin, viola, violoncello, double-bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, and trumpet, which are necessarily taught everywhere.

* In Catholic countries the study of the organ is generally combined with that of improvization; in Protestant countries, they are independent, and the organ is considered solely as an instrument.

music, modern history, geography, arithmetic, poetry, and dramatic literature; French and Italian.

The Royal Conservatory of Milan (1807), called "Verdi Conservatory," receives about 250 scholars and distributes them among the various classes and various grades, according to ability, by means of examinations that take place every October, and for these one has to put one's name down in advance, producing certificates of good conduct, good constitution and literary studies; one also has to prove a knowledge of the Italian language. New pupils are not accepted until there are vacancies. Candidates for examination in composition pay 170 *lire;* in all the other branches the price is 150 *lire.* This establishment has 46 professors and is supported by the State.

Composition, counterpoint and fugue, harmony, military instrumentation, theory, singing; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, cornet.

That of Florence (1860) (*Regio Istituto musicale*), which, in addition to its subsidy, possesses a rich endowment, counts 26 professors and more than 200 pupils.

Composition, counterpoint and fugue, reading of scores, accompaniment of figured bass, *solfeggio* and theory; singing; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone; æsthetics.

At the Royal Conservatory of Palermo (1615) supported by the town and State, there are 28 pro-

fessors and an average of 150 scholars, who are not received until the age of 10 or 12; an application has to be addressed before September 15. There is an entrance fee of 50 *lire* for each; then the annual payment is 400 *lire* for some, and 200 for others; there are also some free places.

Composition, military instrumentation; singing, choral ensemble; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra; trombone.

There is also a little Royal Conservatoire in Parma, which takes pupils from 9 to 24 years, according to course, and collects a very modest annual fee: 15 *lire*, or even as low as 8.50 for poor pupils. Besides these, there are boarders who pay 600 *lire*, and wear a uniform. The applications for admission are received up to October 1. There are 12 professors and a hundred pupils.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony, *solfeggio*, theory, dictation; singing; piano, organ, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone; history of music.

I believe that there are no other Government schools in Italy. These that follow are solely dependent upon the Municipalities.

The *Istituto Musicale* of Turin (1865) is divided into three schools: preparatory, principal and complementary. Pupils are admitted from the age of 8 to 20, always according to the classes, if the request is addressed before October 6. The provisional

admission is 5 *lire;* that of definite admission is 10 *lire,* to which 10 *lire* must still be added for the enrolment fee. The price of the courses varies from 10 to 100 lires, and the examination fee for a degree costs 20 lires.

The number of pupils is determined each year by the Director, according to the schedule.

Composition, counterpoint and fugue (obligatory in the classes of composition and organ), harmony (obligatory for the organ class), *solfeggio* spoken, *solfeggio* sung, theory, rhythmical and melodic dictation (obligatory for all); singing, choral singing; piano (obligatory for all the instrumental classes), organ (obligatory for all the composition classes), harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, string-quartet, ensemble (obligatory for all); history, geography, Italian.

The *Liceo musicale* of Bologna (1864) numbers 26 professors for about 200 pupils.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony; singing; piano, organ, harp and all orchestral instruments.

At Genoa (1829) the *Civico Istituto di musica,* where 200 pupils, paying an annual fee of from 10 to 50 *lire,* according to the course, receive lessons from 17 professors, being admitted at the age of 9, if they prove their qualifications.

Harmony, *solfeggio,* elementary theory; singing, choral singing; piano, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, piccolo. (Courses planned for organ and harp.)

There are still a number of other schools, having an official or semi-official character, notably in Ferrara, Lucca, Perugia, Padua, which are not without interest.

At the Liceo Civico Benedetto Marcello of Venice (1877), which receives no aid, they collect: 5 lires to pass the examination for admission; then a fee of 20 *lire* for final matriculation. The price of the courses, according to their importance, varies from 20 to 100 *lire* a year. The pupils are received from the age of 8 (*solfeggio*) up to 22 (singing, men). There are 19 professors and about 146 pupils.

The *Liceo* confers two kinds of diplomas; the normal diploma, which is a certificate of study; and the higher diploma, which may even be given to candidates who are not pupils of the *Liceo*, who for this purpose undergo a special examination.

Composition, counterpoint and fugue, harmony, *solfeggio* and theory; singing; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, bombardon.

The Conservatory of Pesaro (1883), one of the most recent in Italy, was founded by a legacy of Rossini, whence comes its name of *Liceo Musicale Rossini;* it is placed under the communal administration. According to the testator's wish, composition and the art of singing are specially taught there.

The *minimum* age is 9 years; the *maximum* from 12 to 18 for instrumentalists, and 20 to 21 for singers; the rules require a certain degree of primary instruction, talent and a good constitution. They

specify that neither the blind * nor deaf-mutes † shall be admitted. The teaching is gratuitous; however, a fee of 120 *lire* is collected for the examinations of the complementary subjects, literature, etc., etc. There are 23 professors and about 110 pupils, a few of whom receive scholarships.

Diplomas are given for composition, licence of instruments or singing, military music and teaching.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony; singing; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone.

This will suffice to give us a view of the official teaching in Italy. As may be seen, these various schools, although having points of contact and resemblance, differ as greatly in their programmes of study as in their importance, tariff, and conditions of admission.

GERMANY possesses large and remarkable Schools of Music, scattered far and wide. We can cite here only a small number, but these will be sufficient to show that they present, independently of their individual worth, a homogeneity that does not exist among the Italian schools.

First of all, there is in Berlin, largely subsidized by the State, the *Royal Academy of Musical Art* (1822), which is, in some measure, a normal school, for it has no elementary classes, and the pupils, who

* This may be wrong, for they are often well endowed musically
† Here they are certainly right.

have to be at least 16, are not admitted until after an examination in which they have to make proof of a certain degree of instruction. They are taught by 45 eminent professors, and number approximately 280, paying a contribution of from 30 to 300 marks, according to the classes.

The *Royal Academy of Fine-Arts* is divided into several sections: the *Royal Institute of Church Music*, which gives gratuitous instruction to 20 pupils; the Institute for pupils in Compositior; and the Institute for the practice of music, of which this is a summary of the programme:

Composition, scoring, theory; singing, physiology of the voice, hygiene for singers; declamation, dramatic art; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, ensemble music, military music; acoustics, history of music, Italian.

The Leipzig Conservatory (1843), has for a long time stood at the head of all establishments of this kind in Germany, and justly retains its renown, for it has produced, in every branch, most remarkable artists. It is not subsidized, but it possesses a guarantee from the State and from the city of Leipzig. The number of professors is 41; that of the pupils may be estimated at 900; they are received after examination and pay a fee of 360 marks if they wish to follow all the courses, 10 marks more for the expense of enrolment, and 1 mark for a card of identity.

## VARIOUS KINDS OF INSTRUCTION

Composition, form, instrumentation, counterpoint and fugue, harmony, scoring; singing, chorus, declamation. dramatic and scenic art, opera; piano, organ, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cor anglais, trombone, quartet and orchestra, ensemble; history of music, æsthetics, metre; Italian (the piano is obligatory for all pupils in singing).

At Dresden, the Royal Conservatory (1856), holds examinations for admission twice a year, April 1st and September 1st. Natives and strangers have to pay first 50 marks for the right of registry, then from 200 to 500 marks according to the classes, plus the expenses of examination. However, several scholarships, complete or partial, are reserved for Germans and citizens of Dresden. There have been as many as 1,286 pupils; the number of professors attached to this establishment, which receives at once subsidies from the King, the State and the City and from a Society of patronage, is also respectable,—about 125. Certificates and diplomas of honour are given after the examination at the end of the year.

Composition, form (historical development of forms of composition), counterpoint, fugue, harmony, scoring, conducting of orchestra, accompaniment, study of teaching (theory, piano, singing), theory; singing, chorus, opera, opera-comique and other kinds, declamation, oratory, ensemble and *mise en scène* for the opera and theatre; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, tuba, ensemble, chamber-music, orchestra, orchestra and chorus; history of music, literature; French, Italian.

Important also is the Conservatory of Cologne (1850), subsidized at the same time by the State, Town, and Province, with 40 professors and more than 500 pupils, who are received after examination and must be at least 13 years old; for the singing-classes the women have to be 16 and the men 18. There is an entrance fee of 20 marks and the cost of the classes is from 60 to 450 marks a year; moreover, there are some rehearsals and supplementary classes.

Composition, instrumentation, counterpoint, harmony, scoring, sight-reading, theory, *solfeggio*, dictation; singing, vocal ensemble, choral ensemble; declamation, scenic art, opera ensemble, acting; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, string quartet, ensemble of wind-instruments, instrumental ensemble, orchestra; history of music, liturgy, pedagogy, literature; Italian.

The Royal Conservatory of Stuttgart (1856), presents a peculiarity that we have not met with elsewhere: it is divided into a School to produce artists, which is the Conservatory proper, and another school of music for amateurs; and the artists have to pay more for their education than the amateurs, for whom it is probably thought a more summary education is sufficient. For artists, the price of the classes is 60 marks and 80 marks for the higher classes of singing. (Four scholarships are reserved for indigent pupils.) For amateurs, the price is only from 4 to 50 marks. If one wants to attend all the classes together, it is 360 marks.

There are about 40 professors and 500 pupils, but

I am ignorant of the proportion of artists and amateurs.

This establishment, which receives feeble help from the King, State and the Town, to which is added a little capital provided by Queen Olga of Würtemberg, has particularly formed excellent pianists.

Form, instrumentation, counterpoint, harmony, reading of scores, theory, musical dictation; singing, choral ensemble; declamation, scenic art; piano, organ, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, ensemble of strings, ensemble of strings and piano, orchestra; history of music, æsthetics of the piano, æsthetics and literature, Italian.

The young Conservatory of Hanover (1897), which is supported only by the municipality of that city, has adopted a similar plan; the price for artists is from 45 to 200 marks, while for amateurs it is reduced to from 6 to 60 marks. There are already 550 pupils for 32 professors.

Syntax (harmony and counterpoint), scoring; singing, choral ensemble; drama, lyrical drama; piano, organ, harmonium, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, instrumental ensemble, orchestra; history of music; Italian.

Another important school is the Conservatory of Munich (1867), its real name being the *Royal Academy of Music*, with 300 pupils and 36 professors.

Composition, counterpoint (obligatory for the organ pupils), scoring and conducting, harmony (obligatory),

theory; singing, chorus (obligatory); dictation, theatrical art, opera; dance, fencing; piano (obligatory), organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cornet, trombone, kettledrums, chamber-music, quartet, orchestra; history of music (obligatory), liturgy; Italian.

Moreover, schools of music exist in most of the large cities, such as Frankfort (1860), Carlsruhe (1884), Weimar (1872), Hamburg.

The Swiss government seems to be completely uninterested in the fate of schools of music, which have to be self-supporting. The State, however, in 1856, gave the land on which is built the handsome edifice of the Conservatory in Geneva, which was established in 1835, thanks to the generosity of some rich philanthropists of Geneva who were great lovers of music. Each branch is divided into three grades, and, moreover, there is a finishing class, called normal class, the pupils of which are compelled to take lessons in composition, fugue, transposition, history of music and pedagogy. The price varies from 20 to 200 francs a year.

This Conservatory, which employs 52 professors and 20 substitutes, gives instruction to 1,250 pupils, who receive after annual examinations rewards consisting of silver and bronze medals and *accessits*. A so-called *honour-prize* can be accorded to the pupil, who, during a succession of years distinguishes himself exceptionally. Here is the condensed programme:

## VARIOUS KINDS OF INSTRUCTION

Composition, improvisation, instrumentation, harmony, accompaniment, *solfeggio,* theory; vocalization and art of singing, reading at sight (singing); lyrical diction, declamation; piano, organ, harmonium, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, reading at sight (instrumental), quartet, orchestra; history of music, history of form and musical styles.

Although of far less importance and not to be compared to it, we must note the existence of the Academy of Music (1886), also in Geneva, a private establishment, the pupils of which vary in number between 100 and 200, with a variable number of professors, and sometimes *virtuosi* who are passing through and who are seized in their flight for a series of lessons, which has its interest; at the present moment, it seems to have about 16 stationary ones on duty. The tariff of the courses varies from 50 to 300 francs a year. Reports of study and diplomas are given at the end of the studies.

Composition, instrumentation, counterpoint, harmony, *solfeggio;* singing, vocal ensemble, diction, *orthophonie;* piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, guitar (!), reading at sight, ensemble of violins, instrumental ensemble; history; Italian.

At the "School of Music," in Berne (1815), which has only 11 professors for 300 pupils, the programme is infinitely more restricted than one would expect in a city of its importance, and in a country where musical instinct is far from being deficient.

This establishment, which is quite old, lives, however, by means of its own resources.

The pupils pay from 10 to 140 Frs. according to the classes (10 for chorus classes and 140 for advanced piano).

Harmony, singing, chorus; piano, organ, violin, violoncello (the programme provides for courses in quartets, ensemble and wind-instruments when the state of the funds permits).

There are other schools, especially in Bâle, Zurich and Lausanne, but I am not sufficiently informed about them.

In Austria, the Conservatory of the Society of the Friends of Music in Vienna (1817), receives grants from the Emperor, the State, the Provinces of the North-East, the Commune, and the Court Theatre. Pupils are admitted from 10 to 24 years of age according to the classes; they have to be well constituted and know how to speak German. The payment varies, according to the importance of the class, from 40 to 400 kronen. There are 61 professors for 950 pupils.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony; singing, dramatic art, dramaturgy general, diction, opera; acting, dancing, fencing and gymnastics; clavier, piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone; history of music; French, Italian.

## VARIOUS KINDS OF INSTRUCTION

Hungary possesses at Budapest the Royal and National Academy of Music (1874), where children are received from 8 to 12 years, and singing pupils from 18 for the men and 15 for the women. There is an examination for admission, in which evidence must be given of a little knowledge of the specialty to which the pupil is destined; however, for the harp, the *Cembalo* * and the wind-instruments, no previous knowledge is exacted, and the course begins with the most elementary grades.

One has to pay, first, 10 crowns for the right of enrolment, which is renewed every year; then 50 or 60 crowns up to 200, according to the rank of the class. However, the teaching is gratuitous for the viola and wind-instruments; there are also scholarships for the pupils who appear to be gifted, unfortunate and whose parents are interesting. At each period of study a pupil may be turned out if he does not progress.

There are 38 professors, two auxiliaries for the scenic studies, and about 350 pupils.

The Academy of Music receives many grants from the State and City, and others from individuals, foundations, etc.

Composition,† theory; singing, chorus and *solfeggio*; declamation, dramatic singing, opera; dancing, fencing, scenic exercises; piano, organ, harp, cembalo, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, chamber-

* Instrument peculiar to Hungary.

† Including orchestration, counterpoint and harmony.

music, ensemble of wind-instruments, orchestra, course of teaching the piano; history of music, liturgy, pedagogy, æsthetics, poetics, methods; history of Hungarian literature; Italian.

The Conservatories of Roumania are entirely under the charge of the State. In that of Bucharest (1865), one can be received between 10 and 18 years, after proving some literary knowledge as well as qualifications for the classes desired. The price of these classes ranges from 20 to 100 francs for the Roumanians and from 40 to 200 for strangers, but many dispensations are granted. The number of pupils is 380, who receive lessons from 25 professors.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony, theory; singing, *solfeggio*, choral ensemble; declamation and lyrical drama, piano, organ, harp, instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone.

At the Conservatory of *Jassy* (1860), the conditions of admission and the fees are identical, on account of the limited number of professors, who are only 12 for 350 pupils; admission is granted by means of a competition, which takes place September 1.

When their resources permit, the best pupils of these two establishments generally go to Vienna or Paris to finish their studies and perfect themselves.

Harmony, theory and *solfeggio;* singing; declamation; piano, instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone.

There is only one Conservatory in Greece, that of Athens (1871), which receives pupils from the whole

Orient. It is not subsidized by the State, which, nevertheless, takes an interest in it and directs it; it owes its existence to two very rich Philhellenes and to certain Greek colonies in other countries that have given large sums of money to the Hellenic Government for this purpose. They have 20 professors, each of whom has an assistant; the number of pupils is now more than 300, of whom 50 receive gratuitous instruction; for the others, the expenses amount to from $9 to $36 a year, and there are in addition certain fees for admission and $6 for a diploma.

At the examinations for admission, which take place in September, the pupil has to give proof of certain musical knowledge; the limit of age is from 9 to 19 for men and 9 to 17 for women. The distribution of rewards is very intelligently arranged: at the examinations at the end of the year the pupils whose studies are considered as complete receive diplomas, the number of which is not limited, and which constitute a kind of baccalaureate-in-music; but beyond that there is a special competition for three gold medals, and still another competition to obtain the scholarships for the academic year; and then, as a means of encouragement, 1st and 2d prizes and 1st and 2d *accessits* are bestowed.

Composition and counterpoint, harmony, reading of scores, orchestration, *solfeggio* and theory; singing, ensemble vocal music; declamation; dancing, fencing, gymnastics; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, tuba, ensemble instrumental music, orchestra; history of music, history of the theatre,

æsthetics, mythology, psychology, the art of costume, rhythm and metre, literature; French and Italian (obligatory for pupils for the stage).

The principal Conservatory of Russia is that of St. Petersburg (1862), which receives from the State (Minister of the Interior) a fairly good subsidy, besides which numerous scholarships (more than 200 in 1898-9) are liberally distributed by the Emperor, the Empress, grand dignitaries of the State, by the Department of the Navy, the Department of War, by other establishments and by the Conservatory itself, which reduces the number of pay pupils to a small enough fraction of the whole. For those, the annual due is 200 roubles.

The total number of pupils is about 800, who receive instruction from 89 professors or substitutes. Here is the way in which this very complete instruction is divided and taught by the celebrated masters of the Russian school:

Composition, instrumentation, conducting of an orchestra, harmony and counterpoint, theory, *solfeggio;* singing, church singing, chorus; declamation, opera, preparation for the stage, scenic ensemble, dancing; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cornet, trombone, tuba, instruments of percussion, quartets, many classes of ensemble instruments, string and wind, with or without piano, orchestra; religion, history of music and æsthetics, history and geography, mathematics, physics, calligraphy, general literature; Russian, German, Italian.

In the second place comes that of Moscow (1864), elegantly installed since 1898 in a beautiful edifice that unites all the qualities of a comfortable school, sheltering a body of 60 professors and 600 pupils aged from 10 to 30 years, who pay 200 roubles a year. There are a certain number of scholarships destined for poor scholars and exclusive talents.

This establishment is subsidized by the State. After having terminated the complete course of his specialty and that of the accessory subjects and the scientific course, the pupil obtains a diploma or a certificate.

Composition, form, orchestration, fugue, counterpoint, harmony (obligatory), theory (obligatory), *solfeggio* (obligatory); singing, piano, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra; musical encyclopædia (obligatory), history of music (obligatory), scientific classes (the programme of which corresponds to that of the five classes of the Russian gymnasium), history of art and literature.

The oldest of all is that of Warsaw (1821), which bears the title of "Institut Musical" and comprises 37 professors for 500 pupils approximately. Here pupils are received from the age of 12 to 20 years; an exception is made for those of remarkable talents.

The expenses of study are from 50 to 100 roubles a year. A modest sum is granted by the Treasury.

There are three kinds of examinations: the examination of admission; examinations at the end of the year; and examinations at the end of study. The programme is of somewhat small compass:

Composition; solo singing; piano, organ, stringed instruments; flute, clarinet, bassoon, cornet, horn, trombone.

The Institute of music in Helsingfors (Finland) is divided into a preparatory school and an advanced school, where admission is by means of examinations; in the first one pays 125 francs a year; in the second 200 or 250.

The pupils of the preparatory school have to follow at the same time the course of the *Lycée*, or to pursue their education in some other manner.

To a somewhat large grant from the Russian Government, is added some aid from the Musical Society of Helsingfors. This establishment, the programme of which announces elevated tendencies, includes only 15 professors and about 150 pupils.

Composition and instrumentation, counterpoint and fugue, harmony (given theme), harmony (in general bass) (obligatory), theory general and analytical (obligatory), *solfeggio* and dictation (obligatory); singing, vocal ensemble and chorus; dictation; stage deportment; piano, organ, violin, viola, violoncello, brass instruments, chamber instruments; history of music (obligatory); theory and practice of musical teaching.

If we pass into Bohemia, we find a very fine Conservatory in Prague (1808); good faith forces me to say that my information is of the date 1858! But this is none the less interesting, for it shows how very far advanced the studies were at this period; the programme might have been made yesterday, and I have

good reasons to believe that it has not deteriorated, but that it has kept in the line of progress.

Now in that far-away period, they had already at the said Conservatory of Prague 19 professors * and 138 pupils,† who paid an entrance fee of from 4 to 20 florins according to the classes, and were subject to various other fees in addition to money fines, a proof of severe discipline. They were admitted between 10 and 13 years,‡ by proving a good constitution, musical aptitude (a correct ear), and some primary instruction. After 6 years of study, they are admitted to a final examination.

They had even then grants and resources of divers natures, which have suffered modifications, but what is really remarkable is the programme of study, which was already very complete, and which has even improved since then. They taught there:

Composition, theory; singing, choruses; lyric declamation, theatrical declamation; dancing and theatrical deportment; piano, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, cornet à pistons; history of music, instrumental and theatrical literature, history, prosody, mythology, æsthetics, style, Catholic religion, geography, arithmetic, calligraphy; French, German, Italian.

There are at least three Conservatories in Holland, but to my great regret I lack data regarding one of them,—that of The Hague (1826).

* Now there are 28.

† Now there are from 350 to 400.

‡ Now 14 years and knowing something already about music.

The most important is that of Amsterdam (1862), dependent upon the great "Society for the Development and Protection of Music," which receives funds from the Province, the City and individuals; they do not reckon, however, more than 80 pupils for 26 professors; but it must be observed that by the side of the Conservatory there is a School of Music that includes more than 700 pupils, and serves as a kind of nursery for it. At the Conservatory itself none but pupils about 17 years of age are admitted, who study as artists and who are already sufficiently developed to enable one to judge of their talent and of their future.

The fees of registration amount to 200 florins; for singing lessons, 250; preparatory course, 150; *solfeggio*, 40. . . . Some partial or even total reductions are granted on the request of the director. At the end of three years, a certificate of detailed studies may be obtained.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony, *solfeggio*, theory; singing, *solfeggio* and chorus; declamation, diction, deportment; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra; history of music; French, German, Italian.

The Conservatory of Rotterdam (1845), which modestly enough calls itself School of Music, is placed under the protection of the same big society. Its statutes are not, however, similar: there pupils can be received at the age of 8 years, and, at the end of the year, diplomas for performers and teachers are distributed. There are 21 professors and 672 pupils:

## VARIOUS KINDS OF INSTRUCTION

Composition, counterpoint, harmony, *solfeggio ;* singing, chorus ; piano, organ, stringed instruments, wind instruments, chamber-music, orchestra ; history of music.

I believe that DENMARK possesses only one Conservatory,—that of Copenhagen (1867), which does not seem very important. It receives some paying scholars, whose expenses may amount to from 22 to 264 kronen, but it admits gratuitously those who are unfortunate and well endowed. The number of professors is 18 and there are about 72 pupils. The school is supported by a testamentary legacy, according to the terms of which the pupils cannot number more than 50; a grant of the State allows it to extend this number.

Analysis and form, instrumentation, counterpoint, harmony, musical theory ; singing, chorus ; piano, organ, violin, violoncello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, ensemble music and orchestra ; history of music ; German, Italian.

In SWEDEN, at the Royal Conservatory of Stockholm (1881?) pupils are received from the age of 12 to 20 years; however, this limit can be extended up to 25 years for candidates for the classes in composition, organ and singing. The courses are paying, and the admission fee is 7 florins; there are some scholarships for indigent pupils. The funds are provided by the State, which largely subsidizes it. The Royal Theatre adds a small sum for the support of the classes in opera and lyric art. The average num-

ber of scholars is about 170, with 27 professors. There are public competitive examinations and diplomas for organists, *maîtres de chapelles*, leaders of military fanfares, professors, etc., etc.

Composition, counterpoint, form, instrumentation, military instrumentation, scoring, harmony, musical divine service, accompaniment, *solfeggio* and church singing; singing, chorus, vocal ensemble; declamation, opera, scenic art, study of *rôles*; deportment, plastic arts, gymnastics, ballet; piano, organ, harp, stringed and wind instruments, ensemble, orchestra; history of music, acoustics, Italian; organ and piano tuning.

Norway, a very musical country, has the Conservatory of Christiania (1865), which has 28 professors and 450 pupils. The price runs from 5 to 25 kronen a year, according to the course; certain gratuitous places are reserved for poor and well endowed pupils. One can be admitted between 12 and 20 years, by means of examinations that take place in January and September. The rewards consist of books of music.

The State as well as a special society furnishes a subsidy; the King gives some scholarships.

Composition, instrumentation, counterpoint, harmony, practical modulation, musical theory; singing, chorus; declamation, deportment; piano, organ, harmonium, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, ensemble; tuning of the piano and organ.

England seems to possess in London, and in the Guildhall School of Music (1880), the most colossal school of music in the world, at least with regard to space and the number of pupils, which is not less than 3,100. I believe I saw somewhere that in 1896 there were 4,000; in comparison, the number of professors is restricted enough, only 147.

Into this establishment, subsidized by the City, the pupils are admitted without any age limit, on the sole condition of paying a fee that varies, according to the classes and periods of study, from one to six guineas a quarter, then five shillings more for an entrance fee, and five shillings deposit. Each pupil, no matter who he is, must pay two shillings and five pence each term. Medals of gold, silver and bronze, and diplomas are distributed.

Composition, form, analysis, orchestration, counterpoint, canon, fugue, harmony, scores, harmonization at first sight on the piano, figured bass at first sight on the piano, accompaniment for church service, conducting of orchestras and chorus, improvization, *solfeggio*, theory, dictation; singing, choruses, choral ensemble; declamation; gestures, deportment, choregraphy, fencing; piano, organ, harmonium, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone and euphonium, tuba, cornet, kettledrums, guitar, mandolin, chamber-music of strings and of wind, vocal, orchestra, military music; acoustics, history of music; French, German, Italian.

There are many other schools in London; I will mention only two more: the Royal Academy of Mu-

sic (1822), where one is received for examination in September, November, January, February, April and June. For this examination one guinea is first collected; then the price of the course varies from one guinea to eleven pounds one shilling. The maintenance is assured by a private society and certificates of study are bestowed. There are 131 professors and about 500 pupils.

Composition, harmony and counterpoint, theory, *solfeggio* and dictation; singing, chorus, choral ensemble; diction and declamation, drama, opera; deportment, fencing and physical exercises, dancing, choregraphy; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, ensemble instrumental music, instrumental and vocal, orchestra, military music; French, Italian, English, German.

The Royal College of Music (1876), is supported by a fund and diverse gifts. Admission is by examination and without limit of age. Each pupil pays twelve guineas quarterly; the entrance fee is 2 guineas, and one has to deposit 5 guineas for the 1st and the 3d examinations and $2\frac{1}{2}$ guineas for the 2d. A certain number of prizes, some of which owe their origin to special funds, are given at the end of the yearly examinations. There are 69 professors and 450 pupils.

Composition, orchestration, harmony, counterpoint, analysis, accompaniment, scores, *solfeggio*, transposition, dictation and theory; singing, chorus; theatrical art, declamation, opera, diction; deportment and choregraphy; piano,

organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, kettledrum, and drum orchestra, military music, chamber-music strings and wind, vocal; history of music; French, Italian, German.

None of these English schools seem to have produced, unless by exception, great artists that have made a sensation; generally speaking, their pupils who have futures finish their studies on the continent, —in Germany, Belgium or France.

Before leaving England, I will mention the Royal College of Music in Manchester, whose programme offers a few interesting peculiarities. There are 33 professors; I do not know the number of pupils. One has to pay 30 pounds a year and 3 guineas more for the orchestra.

Composition, harmony (obligatory); singing, chorus; diction; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cor-anglais, trombone, double bassoon, ensemble, quartet, orchestra; history of music; Italian.

The piano is obligatory for singers, for all the instrumentalists, for organists, and for pupils in the composition classes; moreover, the pupils in composition are obliged to learn a stringed instrument; Italian and diction are obligatory for the pupils of singing; the ensemble is obligatory for all the instrumentalists, and also the orchestra.

The most important school in Spain is the Conservatory of Madrid (1830), subsidized by the State, where 55 professors give instruction to nearly 1,600

pupils. To be admitted, it is necessary to have a little primary instruction, to know at least how to read and write, and to have a correct ear. To enter the classes in *solfeggio* one must be over 9 years; to enter the classes for singing and declamation the women must be at least 15 and the men 16. They pay a fee of 15 pesetas for the right of enrolment and 5 pesetas for the examinations, which can be dispensed with in the case of indigence. Certificates are given at the end of study, 1st, 2d and 3d prizes, and diplomas of master-composer, for which 150 pesetas have to be paid to the State.

Counterpoint, fugue and composition, harmony, *solfeggio* and theory; singing, vocal ensemble; lyrical declamation, declamation; piano, organ, harmonium, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cornet à pistons, trombone and ophicleide, chamber-music; history and philosophy of music, grammar and literature; French, Italian.

Another considerable establishment is the Conservatory of Barcelona, dependent on the *Lycée* of Her Majesty Isabella II., where each pupil pays a small monthly fee, which they try to make as small as possible and which may even be entirely suppressed when there are vacancies, and in favour of interesting pupils who are poor. This school, which is supported by the shareholders of the Grand Theatre, the Municipality and the Province, numbers 42 professors and more than 1,000 pupils, who receive medals and crowns of gold, silver, and bronze; there is also a competitive examination for a professor's diploma.

## VARIOUS KINDS OF INSTRUCTION

Composition, harmony, transposition, theory, *solfeggio*, dictation; singing, declamation; piano, organ and harmonium, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cor-anglais, trombone, bass-clarinet, bugle and bass tuba, guitar, string-quartet; acoustics and history of music; French, German, English, Italian.

Less important is the School of Music in Saragossa, whose number of scholars rarely exceeds 250 or 300, with 14 professors and 5 or 6 assistants. The examination fee is from 5 to 10 pesetas and the price of the course varies between 20 and 80 pesetas. One must be 8 years of age for the general classes, and 15 for those of singing. The town furnishes a slight support. They bestow diplomas, and 1st and 2d prizes.

Foreign pupils can present themselves at this school to pass examinations called "free instruction," by submitting to the official programme, by means of a fee of from 12 to 32 pesetas; these examinations give no rights to the rewards of the school.

Composition, harmony, *solfeggio*; singing; piano, organ, harmonium, violin; French, Italian.

The most recent of the Spanish Conservatories is that of Valencia (1879), slightly aided by the municipality and the provincial deputation; the sum for matriculation is 30 pesetas for *solfeggio*, and 35 pesetas for all the other classes. There is, moreover, an examination fee of 2.50 pesetas; the candidates have to know how to read and write. There are at present not more than 8 titulary professors, and two

assistants, and 260 pupils; the prizes and *accessits* consist of diplomas. The teaching there is still quite limited.

Composition, harmony, *solfeggio;* singing, piano, organ, harmonium, harp, instruments played with the bow, flute, clarinet.

If we pass into PORTUGAL, we shall find at Lisbon, the Royal Conservatory, which is very important, of whose foundation date I am ignorant, but it is surely anterior to 1835, and whose expenses, which are very considerable, are entirely paid by the State. It employs 32 professors, and the number of pupils, relatively small, is about 300; they have to pay only a fee of registry, which is from 2.50 francs to 6 francs, according to the classes or courses. The lowest age for admission of both sexes, for foreigners as well as for the Portuguese, is 9 years; however, none can be admitted into the classes of singing or declamation before 14 years for the women and 15 or 16 for the men. The courses are held from October to June, and the year ends with competitive examinations, when diplomas of honour, prizes and *accessits* are given. The programme of study is remarkably complete:

Composition, counterpoint and fugue, harmony, piano accompaniment, scores, transposition, theory and *solfeggio;* singing; theatrical song, choruses; theatrical art, lyrical declamation, tragedy, drama, comedy and farce, diction and declamation, recitation, study of *rôles,* mimicry, art of costume, theatrical gymnastics, fencing; piano, organ,

harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, saxophone, cornet, chamber-music, orchestra; history of music and musical literature, universal and national history, history of the ancient and modern theatre, poetics, psychology, general grammar, æsthetics, reading, geography, general and Portuguese literature; Italian (obligatory for pupils in singing and composition).

In Belgium, there is first of all the Conservatory of Brussels (1813), very serious and important, to which one is admitted by an examination that takes place in September, if a primary instruction and a satisfactory conformation are proved; the natives pay a small annual sum of 5 francs, which for foreigners is raised to 200 francs. The number of professors, tutors or monitors is about 70; that of the pupils, 600. At the examination prizes, mentions and *accessits* are distributed.

Counterpoint and fugue, harmony, plain-chant, *solfeggio* and theory; singing, vocal ensemble, choral ensemble; declamation, deportment and mimicry; clavier, piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, saxophone, chamber-music for strings and wind, orchestra.

At the Royal Conservatory of Liège (1827), the conditions of admission and the prices of instruction are the same as at Brussels. There are 35 professors for 500 pupils. The admission day is in October.

Composition, fugue, harmony, *solfeggio;* singing; piano, organ, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cornet à pistons, trombone, tuba, chamber-music.

It is about the same at the Royal Conservatory of Ghent (1833), which employs 47 professors and instructs 550 pupils aged seven years at the lowest. There also they exact primary instruction, and the pupils have to follow it up and bring proof with certificates. The price for the class in *solfeggio* is 2 fr. 50 quarterly, and for the pupils of instruments, 5 francs. A certain number of free places are reserved for privates in the army, pupils in the classes of Netherlandish singing, children of destitute parents, etc. At Ghent and Liège the examinations give prizes, *accessits*, and medals of silver and enamel.

Composition, plain-chant, practical and written harmony, reading and transposition on the piano ; Netherland singing, French and Italian, vocal ensemble ; scenic art, French declamation, Netherland declamation ; deportment, mimicry, calisthenics ; piano, organ, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, cor-anglais, saxophone, trombone, tuba, cornet and bugle, chamber-music, string-quartet, ensemble.

At Antwerp (1867) the Royal Flemish Conservatory unites the respectable number of 1,200 pupils under the direction of only 43 professors. The *maximum* payment is 5 francs for the natives and 50 francs for foreigners.

Counterpoint and fugue, harmony, *solfeggio ;* singing, vocal ensemble ; Netherland declamation, lyrical declamation ; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, chamber-music, orchestra ; ancient music, Flemish literature.

The Belgian Conservatories, large and fine schools that have furnished an ample harvest of celebrated or remarkable artists, all receive the triple subsidy of State, Province and Town.

Finally, in France, we have the Conservatory of Paris (1795), subsidized by the State, or, to speak more correctly, belonging to the State, whose universal renown is such that we can dispense with all commentary, where one cannot gain admission save by a series of eliminating examinations which take place every year in the month of October, and for which it is necessary to furnish proofs of a certain knowledge suitable to the age. The age for admission in theoretical or instrumental classes extends from 9 to 22 years. For singing, men can be received from 18 to 26 years, and women from 17 to 23.

There 800 pupils, in round numbers, receive gratuitously the care of a body of 81 professors or tutors; and at the end of a scholastic year, examinations, some of which are public and others private, are held, and the successful ones receive prizes, *accessits* or medals, by way of encouragement.

Composition,* counterpoint and fugue, harmony, accompaniment, improvization (at the organ), *solfeggio ;* † singing, ensemble vocal; dramatic declamation, lyric declamation, opera, opéra-comique; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, cornet à pistons; chamber-music, orchestra ensemble; history of

* Including the orchestra and the study of form.

† Including theory and dictation.

music, history and dramatic literature; deportment and dancing; fencing; stage laws.

The Conservatory of Paris has *branches* in the Departments, at the present time there are 26: at Lille (1826), Toulouse (1826), Dijon (1845), Lyons (1874), Nancy (1884), Nantes (1884), Perpignan (1884), Rennes (1884), then more important ones, under the title of Écoles Nationales, Aix (1884), Bayonne (1884), Boulogne-sur-Mer (1884), Caen (1884), Chambéry (1884), Digne (1884), Douai (1884), Le Mans (1884), Nisme (1884), Roubaix (1884), St. Omer (1884), Valenciennes (1884), Cette (1885), Tours (1885), Angoulême (1887), Montpellier (1889), Amiens (1891), Moulins (1893), the number of professors varying from 4 (Digne) to 32 (Lille and Toulouse). These receive subsidies from the State and the Municipality at the same time.

Of course, owing to the varying resources of the different localities, these branch-schools do not all have the same value. There are, however, a few of them, particularly among the oldest, which have sent out some very good pupils, who often come to Paris to finish their education. In a volume published in 1872, Ernest Reyer, the composer of *Sigurd*, *Salammbô* and *La Statue*, remarked that in the Departments there are "some music-schools that are considered as branches of the Paris Conservatory, but which, in reality, are merely communal schools supported by the town, and which are placed under the

authority, sometimes a little too arbitrary, of a municipal council. . . ." And he added: "We might wish that our provincial music-schools, being attached to the Ministry of the Beaux-Arts by serious bonds, could acquire the right to call themselves, otherwise than by the vain formula, branches of the Paris Conservatory." * It has always been very much the same: the connection of these schools with the Ministry of the Beaux-Arts began in 1826, with Lille and Toulouse, and there were already four official branches at the time when the above lines were written; the number was gradually increased until 1893, when the branch of Moulins was created, which is still the youngest. Their directors are nominated by a ministerial order, their professors by the Préfet, they are subjected to periodical inspection, but they are not dependent, as is often believed, upon the Paris Conservatory; they are under the direct jurisdiction of the Ministry. Their programmes are reductions of that of Paris; from that of one of the oldest and that of the one most recently created, we can gather a sufficient idea:

*Lille:*

Harmony, *solfeggio;* singing, vocal ensemble; lyric declamation, diction; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, cornet, saxophone, chamber-music, orchestra.

*Moulins:*

*Solfeggio:* piano, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, saxophone.

* E. Reyer, *Notes de musique* (edit. Charpentier).

In all these French schools, as in the case of the Paris Conservatory, entrance is gained by examinations in October, and the instruction is *entirely free*, that is to say, there is nothing whatever to pay, either for the right of entrance, nor for examinations, nor diplomas, nor for anything at all—and this holds good for foreigners as well as for natives,—a fact peculiar to France.

And we must regard this complete gratuity, which, as a consequence of its admirable philanthropic side, excludes all idea of exploitation, and allows the pupils to be sorted out, and only those to be admitted who show qualities or very certain predispositions, as well as the power of dismissing them when they do not fulfil their promises, I say, we must regard this as one of the elements of superiority, but not the only one, of the Conservatory of Paris, which, without pretending to realize the ideal of perfection, is certainly the model normal school, and justly attracts students from all parts of the world.

From this little circular trip that we have just made through the Conservatories belonging to the majority of the countries of Europe, and from the notes that we have been able to make upon a certain number of them on the way, the sagacious reader can deduct many instructive things, simply by taking the pains to look for them and making comparisons for himself.

The number of classes and their nomenclature is not the principal thing to take into consideration. We see very plainly, in each of the schools that we

have just passed under review that stand at the head of musical instruction in their country or district, as well as in all other analogous establishments, to whatsoever nation they may belong, there always exists a certain foundation programme of study that is the same everywhere, forming the very basis of the teaching, its indispensable part, and which, moreover, could hardly vary. Thus in all of them, even the least important, it is necessary to learn to sing, and to play the piano, as well as all the instruments constituting the symphonic orchestra; it is also demanded that *solfeggio* and theory shall be taught, under whatever head, and some elements of harmony, without which there would no longer be any schools of music. This is not the real interest.

What is instructive to study, is the balance and the weighing of the divers studies, agreeing always with the national tendencies and local aspirations, revealing these when they do not sanction them; it is their correlation with or divergence from the importance of the establishment that is manifested in the number of professors who teach in them and of the pupils who follow the course, and the relation between these figures and those of the population shows the degree of musical civilization of every country. There are also many other things that can be divined, and that would take a long time and be profitless to enumerate in detail. There is certainly a distinction to be drawn between those schools that limit themselves strictly to instructing their pupils in matters of pure musical technique, and those that,

surveying the education of an artist from a higher standpoint, introduce into their programmes courses of History of Music, Literature, General Æsthetics, Prosody or Metrics, Acoustics, or foreign languages (the knowledge of one or two foreign languages, independently of their utility to singers and their convenience to every artist who is called upon to travel, is one of the most powerful elements of literary and æsthetic instruction). In others, there will be noticed a greater concern for exercises that develop physical strength or gracefulness, such as Dancing, Choregraphy, Fencing, even Gymnastics and Calisthenics (a group of exercises that are excellent for the physical culture of young girls). This shows that special care is taken to form artists for the stage; these can ill afford to neglect the subject of deportment and the plastic arts. A knowledge of History, Mythology and Psychology are indispensable to the composer and also to the actor, and if they do not acquire these at their Conservatory, they will be obliged to learn them elsewhere, and at their own expense. So, nothing of all this is immaterial: far from it: Paleography itself (the study of ancient writings), of which we have found but one chair, in Rome, allows the initiated to read at sight old forms of musical notation now fallen into disuse, and may lead to archæological discoveries. What is most to be regretted is that these extra-musical courses, which, as we have already shown, are so helpful in developing the artistic sense by a general elevation of the mind, are not more widely extended, made

obligatory everywhere and practised continually. In many schools, we are forced to admit that even if they do figure on the programme, they are only there after an intermittent fashion; indeed they are sometimes suppressed, on account of pecuniary reasons, and often for consecutive years, to the great detriment of serious students. The intention is manifested, nevertheless, and this we must take into account.

We may be allowed, on the other hand, to regard as superfluous or puerile, certain courses in the piccolo, kettledrums, and harmonium, etc. . . . instruments which really do not require any special teaching and do not raise the level of the school in the slightest degree; and, from another point of view, those of Geography, Arithmetic and Calligraphy, as going, perhaps, a little too far astray from the principal aim; but before condemning or turning them into ridicule, we ought to know exactly the social conditions of every country and the mean degree of intellectual culture of the candidates. Then, doubtless, in most cases, there would be a reason and normal explanation for everything. But what ought to be required everywhere, as we have seen it clearly formulated in Leipzig, Manchester, Lisbon and other places, being elsewhere implied and as a matter of course, is that every student of singing should be compelled to study the piano, and to become, *ipso facto*, a musician. Many other things, often unexpected, can be learned by turning over these notes, which I should have liked to make complete if I had

felt sure that everybody would be interested and had not feared that to many they would be tedious.

It is very evident that there are strong contrasts to be established between all these various establishments created for instruction in music and for popularizing it with the masses, as we shall now see. But there is one point that is common to all and which should attract the attention of all those who are seeking practical advice of various kinds in this book: it is that within their sphere of action they attract the highest class of teaching and the safest and most famous professors in their district. This is their duty to the inhabitants and to their own interest as academic establishments. Moreover, on account of the number of pupils that pass through their hands, the numerous opportunities they have in examinations and other exercises to control their course and study their temperament, the professors of a Conservatory are in a far better position than any others to increase their experience and to verify the correctness of their methods. We may then admit, *à priori*, and in the absence of verification, that among them we shall have the best chances, without going beyond the radius of any given locality, of finding the safest and most trustworthy guides; whether we attend their classes in the Conservatory, or prefer to consult them privately on account of any personal or social considerations, with which we have nothing to do here. Their official position marks them for confidences. But this must not, by

any means, be taken as an absolute rule; for very often, especially for the special study of any particular branch, we find masters of altogether superior excellence in the fields of free teaching.

But when the question is one of a number of studies that we want to carry as far as possible, a very good combination, the surest and at the same time, the most agreeable, to my mind, consists in following the Conservatory courses, taking them as a general line of conduct, yet without depriving ourselves of the aid of a private teacher who acts as tutor, and is willing to play this secondary *rôle* and conscientiously limit himself to it. In all Conservatories of the first rank, there is no professor who would object to this combination; indeed many of them would be the first to advise it, on the judicious condition that the tutor should be known and agreeable to them. Sometimes, but rarely, the regulations are jealous and finical enough to oppose this, stipulating that the pupil, on penalty of expulsion, shall take no lessons outside the school. One must know how to get around such rules; it is always to be managed somehow.

Generally speaking, the classes of purely musical instruction are held two or three times a week and last two hours; that is about the length of time that is universally adopted; moreover, the hours are arranged so that every pupil can participate simultaneously and without fatigue in the different classes that may be useful to him.

The auxiliary courses, those whose aim is the

moral and intellectual instruction of the artist, such as History of Music, the Stage, Æsthetics, Literature, etc., are often in the form of lectures, and take place at longer intervals, every week or fortnight, or even once a month; frequently listeners are admitted who do not belong to the school. If they are good, such attendance cannot be too highly recommended to amateurs interested in matters of art. This is the same custom as is followed in many Universities, notably in Germany and England and also at the College of France and the Sorbonne in Paris.

Very frequently such questions as these are asked: Are all these Conservatories useful?—Is not the liberty of art restricted by the exigences of official teaching?—Does not the artist lose something of his spontaneity by being thus put into a regiment, as it were, and subjected to a kind of musical drill?

I will try to answer these collectively.

First, I will remark that the same fears might be expressed regarding all the Government Schools where are taught the Fine Arts—painting, sculpture and architecture—the usefulness of which seems to me to be demonstrated by the mere fact of their expansion in every country of the globe, without exception, and I ask why music alone should be subject to other laws. If the Conservatories did not supply a real need, we should not have seen them multiply as they have; we should not see new ones springing up every day; if their results were negative, we should see them die; or, at least, some would disappear. Now, we have never heard of a single one that has

closed its doors: they are born, they grow, sometimes they amalgamate with other similar schools that were established first as rivals, and that always end by uniting with them; but not one has been accused of decline, nor is in jeopardy of perishing. Such is their history up to date.

Are they then established simply to make the fortune of the directors and teachers? If this were the case, they would fail in their purpose; for everywhere, except in England where they are remunerated royally, if they accept and seek these posts, it is far more for the honour and love of the art than from pecuniary calculation, for such positions very frequently bring with them impediments to an individual career, and the salaries can only be regarded as indemnities. Do the Governments, Municipalities or protecting societies gain any large profits by them? No, for they subsidize them or support scholarships and never touch anything in return.

To what then shall we attribute their growth and their vitality, if not to the artistic results, hoped for at first, and finally realized and established?

It must be thoroughly understood that the teaching in the large Conservatories, I mean by this those that have reached their complete development, is far from possessing that rigidity publicly attributed to them by some people who never go to see them and who have formed this idea of themselves. Apart from certain principles, as unchangeable as the laws of logic or geometry, each maintains its own freedom of judgment, at least in the classes of composition and

those that border it; and if the instrumental classes, which, however, produce *virtuosi* each having his own and very distinct personality, may sometimes be treated as "musician factories" and "schools of drill," that is only a semi-evil. The musician of the orchestra may be perfectly well compared to a soldier, without any loss or harm done to the dignity of his modest career; and, like him, be subjected to a rigorous discipline. Interrogate orchestral musicians upon this subject, and you will find that the best and the most sought after among them, those upon whom the conductor feels that he can rely, are products of the Conservatories.

But there is still another and most important thing to be considered with regard to the greater number of the large Conservatories of which we have just spoken. This is the sincere spirit of good comradeship and cordial fraternity that reigns in them and makes them essentially sympathetic. Setting aside a few bitter and petty rivalries which only arise in certain classes that are purely feminine and do them no honour, it gives us great pleasure on the contrary to see established among the promoted schoolfellows and comrades a kind of tacit Masonic bond of true metal, analogous to that which exists between the pupils of the other Fine Arts schools, such as the *Normaliens* and the *Polytechniciens*, which prompts them to seek and help each other in after life, like the good and loyal brothers-in-arms they are.

The great objection made by the detractors of official education is the following, which seems to them

to be of great weight: "*The great masters of the past whom we venerate formed themselves without the aid of any Conservatory.*" This is their principal battle horse, their unanswerable argument.

However, this is how we may reply to them: "It must indeed be acknowledged that our great masters did not come out of the Conservatories, but this does not prove that they are useless, nor that they have done nothing for the progress of musical art. The principal duty of a music-school is to increase the number of trained musicians. The diffusion of musical art, which is always increasing, renders the foundation of Conservatories and Music-Schools necessary. When we think of what a veritable army (choirs, orchestras, soloists, conductors, music-teachers, etc.) that the art of music demands for its present needs, we realize that private teaching would be altogether insufficient to provide for it. Moreover, the Conservatories and music-schools offer incontestable advantages. Therefore the musical atmosphere of the Conservatories alone is helpful to youth, just like the stimulus that is found in all collective teaching." * As we have already shown this, it is needless to return to the subject.

It is very certain that Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Weber did not issue from German Conservatories, but this is explained when it is remembered that there were none in their time, since the oldest of all, that of Leipzig, was created in 1843. This did not prevent Mendelssohn from be-

* Rubinstein, *La Musique et ses représentants.*

ing a brilliant professor there, nor Rossini and Rubinstein from founding two others, by different means, one in Pesaro, the other in St. Petersburg; thereby showing plainly that they did not despise the principle, and that they, perhaps, would have been glad to have had done for them in their youth, what, in their old age, they considered good to do for others. I think these are authorities; and many others might be cited.

Still again, it might be well to examine somewhat closely and see whether by chance a few artists of lofty flight have not come out of these so greatly vilified Conservatories; but people never think of that. Their adversaries, when maintaining that the majority of great geniuses have been despised in their lifetime, and that they have had to carve their way through a thousand hardships and acquire their instruction with incessant struggle against winds and waves, might just as well and just as sagely proclaim that the best and most fertile of all schools is that of adversity. This will always be open, alas! and their *protégés* can always be admitted free without examinations or age limits.

The two advantages that are to be sought in making application to a Conservatory are: *economy* and *safe guidance*. The first is always to be found; the second, nearly always; that is to say, with the exception of establishments of an inferior order, easily recognized. With regard to the *superiority of the instruction* in any given branch, that depends upon too many local and personal circumstances for us to

be able to form any advance judgment, and may just as well be found, as we have already said, in independent teaching.

### V. American Conservatories

Never having had occasion to visit the United States, it is impossible for me to express a personal opinion of the numerous schools of music that are found in every large city, or as to their absolute or relative value. I have to rely upon what has been told me by my friends who live in America, and by French artists who have frequented those establishments and communicated their impressions to me.

From this sum of information, confirmed by an attentive reading of the rules or programmes of study that I have been able to procure, I think I may conclude that there would be no interest in establishing a parallel between the Conservatories or other large schools of music in America and the Conservatories on the Old Continent; and this for the very simple reason that they are essentially different, and do not spring from the same ideas.

In Europe, the Conservatories have kept from their origin a certain philanthropical character, and their aim, even when they demand a modest pecuniary equivalent, is principally that of spreading artistic instruction as much as possible among the masses, which is very justly considered a moral and intellectual benefit, and a high element of civilization. Moreover, the philosophers of every age have thought

this. If sometimes, which is exceptional, the dues rise to a somewhat exaggerated figure, we immediately see the appearance, as a corrective, of a new rule that offers gratuity to those who have absolute need of it. Also, almost everywhere, we see the Government patronizing these establishments, supporting and aiding them with funds, believing that from them will be turned out musicians who will make the artistic glory of their country; which, moreover, often happens.

In America, at least according to my information, which comes from different sources, from correspondents too intelligent for me to be greatly in error, we must regard them rather as private enterprises having a commercial character, not destitute of artistic aims, that goes without saying, but more especially preoccupied by augmenting their receipts than by elevating the level of national art. It is true that this conception allows the professors an infinitely larger remuneration than our European schools, but this is a secondary result.

One thing is certain, and that is that although the taste for music is as pronounced among the Americans as in any other nation in the world, which they show by their very just appreciation of talent of every kind, yet there does not exist, properly speaking, an American School. It is only in an *exceptional case* that we can cite a Composer, a Singer, or an Instrumentalist of great worth who has been musically educated exclusively in his own country; and we cannot take these rare and honourable exceptions as a

basis. On the other hand, if a young and gifted artist comes to Europe to study and spend several years under good guidance, we see him return home equipped with all the elements of success: examples are not lacking. This certainly proves that aptitude is not wanting, for study can not create but only develop it. Hence I think I may conclude that those vast and immense musical institutions of the New World, that have thousands of pupils, and try above all else to please and tempt them, in order to attract many more, should be considered especially as schools for amateurs, young men and women of society who want to amuse themselves with music, rather than as schools productive of true artists.

One thing that confirms me in this conviction is the brevity of the studies which is almost the universal rule; they want to get on too fast, much too fast, and they seem to be ignorant that a number of years is required to form a musician of real value. Scarcely has a pupil passed through a course of two or three years, when they think of bringing him before the public. This may have certain advantages sometimes, but it must necessarily be prejudicial to the continuity of serious studies, as they are understood with us.

If anyone is really anxious to discover some resemblance between these institutions and the European establishments, it is in England that this comparison must be sought. There also, the pupils are admitted by an examination for simple classification and are never refused on account of lack of aptitude, nor because they are too young or too old. When-

ever it pleases them to pay the established tariff for their lessons, they are always acceptable and accepted. It is for them to determine whether they are capable or not of profiting by the instruction that is offered to them, and not enrolling themselves if it is likely to be a useless expense. Nothing is obligatory, and they are refused nothing that they demand. They are admitted at their own risk and peril.

As we see, this is an entirely different conception. I do not criticize either of them here; I simply state the fact, as I would also state, if I were in a geography class, that Europe and America are not situated on the same side of the Atlantic Ocean; and I simply conclude that just because of a similitude in the name we must not imagine that what is called "Conservatory" in the United States and England is identical with what we understand on our Old Continent. This is very important, although, it may be, really, only a simple question of words. But, for a clear understanding, it is again necessary for us to discuss meanings.

What is called "Conservatory" in America is known to us as an "*École libre,*" a school composed of a body of professors, each acting on his own account and associated with the aim of attracting a *clientèle,* and constituting an important and numerous organization, as well as forming brilliant pupils.

The most flourishing establishment for musical instruction in the United States seems to me to be the Musical College of Chicago (1867). Pupils can enter it at any age and at any time of year, but

they are not admitted for less than a term, which means ten weeks; the charge for a term varies from $20 to $300, according to the nature of the studies. However, semi-gratuitous and even gratuitous pupils, who have to be recommended by some responsible person, are received. The number of these is determined at the beginning of each year; from these, naturally enough, proofs of ability are required.

The prodigious number of pupils, about 3,000, is unsurpassed throughout the whole world except by the "Guildhall School" in London, yet I see only 61 professors, which seems somewhat out of proportion.

At the end of the examinations and competitions, they distribute certificates for teaching (diploma of graduation); bachelor of music (diploma of artist); and master of music with a decoration (!). I do not believe that this exists anywhere else.

Composition, form, counterpoint, fugue, canon, harmony, theory, *solfeggio;* singing, chorus; diction, opera, dramatic art; deportment, dancing and choregraphy, pantomime, fencing; piano, organ, violin, violoncello, flute, clarinet, bassoon, cornet, *ensemble;* history of music, analysis of pieces; French, German, Spanish, Italian.

There is also in Chicago the American Conservatory (1886), which accepts all pupils, even beginners, who pay from $5 to $80 for a term of six weeks, that is to say from $20 to $320 for a year of four terms, according to the classes and the grades.

There are 68 professors and about 1,200 pupils.

A certificate of study costs $5; a teacher's certificate, $10; a diploma, $15.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony, orchestration, *solfeggio;* singing; diction, declamation, deportment, pantomime, fencing, the art of costume; piano, organ, harp, violin, violoncello, flute, clarinet, cornet, trombone, mandolin, guitar, *banjo,* ensemble; church music, oratorio; normal class; literature; French, German, Italian.

After the Musical College of Chicago, I believe we must place the Conservatory of Music in Boston (1867), where 86 professors instruct 1,960 pupils, who are received at any time of the year and at every degree of advancement, and have to pay from $5 to $300 for a term of ten weeks, according to the classes. There are frequent examinations, twice a term; a certificate only costs a dollar; a diploma, $5.

Here also we find, at a price of from $4.50 to $9, rooms and board for young girls, who for meals, renting of pianos, academic supplies, etc., have a special tariff.

The programme is formidable, and not only embraces music, but extends to the arts of design.

Composition and analysis, conducting, orchestration, instrumentation, harmony, *solfeggio,* theory; voice, singing, chorus; lyric declamation, dramatic art, opera, diction, psychology of the voice, hygiene of the voice and the ear, phonetics, anatomy; physical exercise; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra; cor-anglais, tenor-horn, alto-horn, euphonium, baryton and trombone tuba, saxophone, *drum,* kettledrums, string

quartet, ensemble, orchestra, military music, church music (oratorios and choruses); tuning, acoustics, rhetoric, mathematics, reading (obligatory, an hour a day), literature; school of professors; French, Latin, Italian, German; *stenography, Fine-Arts, drawing, painting, portraits, wood-carving, art-embroidery.*

Very considerable also is the Conservatory of Philadelphia, accommodating 2,500 pupils, with dormitories and a boarding-school for young girls, for which a body of 55 professors suffices.

All kinds of pupils are admitted, even those who know nothing; the academic year is divided into four terms of ten weeks, for each of which it is necessary to pay from $5 to $10. Those who have terminated their studies satisfactorily pay $15 for a diploma; certificates at the end of the year are $5; those pupils who have not remained so long receive a simple voucher, which seems to be gratis.

Composition, harmony and theory, conducting of orchestra, analysis, forms, interpretation and orchestration, *solfeggio,* dictation; singing, vocal ensemble; oratorio, opera, dramatic art, declamation, diction; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, tuba, cornet, alto-horn, cor-anglais, saxophone, *kettle-drums, drum, xylophone, bells, mandolin, guitar, lute, banjo* (sic), *ensemble* instrumental, orchestra and military orchestra, symphonies (eight hands); history of music; literature; living languages; piano tuning.

The National Conservatory of Music in America in New York (about 1885), although dependent

upon a private enterprise, comes nearer to the European establishments, by the spirit of its rules; pupils are received there without distinction of age or nationality, but on the condition that they give proof of a certain degree of aptitude; and certain free places are reserved for pupils who have promising talent. The others have to pay from $15 to $250 for an academic year of eight months.

During the summer (May to August) classes are held for the benefit of the students in schools situated outside the city, seminaries, etc.

Composition, counterpoint, harmony, accompaniment, theory, *solfeggio;* singing, chorus; opera, oratorio, diction, scenic art, fencing; piano, organ, harp, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, cornet, cor-anglais, chamber-music, orchestra; history of music; Italian.

In Baltimore, the Peabody Conservatory (1868), which bears the name of its founder, comprises two schools, one of which is preparatory and absolutely elementary and employs 37 professors. The pupils number approximately 700, who pay, according to the classes they attend and the number of lessons, from $15 to $105, and after examination receive certificates of study, diplomas and honourable mention.

Composition, harmony, *solfeggio;* singing, chorus; piano, reading at sight on the piano, organ, harp, violin, violoncello, flute, clarinet, oboe, cornet, ensemble music, orchestra; acoustics, history of music; French, Italian, German.

Outside of the United States, in Mexico, the National Conservatory of Mexico, seems to be of some importance, since it employs 62 professors. In its programme, we find the names of classes the utility of which I do not see very clearly:

Harmony and composition, *solfeggio*, theory, *graphic music;* singing, choral singing; piano, harp, orchestral instruments, *psaltery*, chamber-music, acoustics and *phonography;* French, Italian.

I know of but two schools of music in South America: the Conservatory of Bogota (New Granada), with 28 professors, which is a large number for 86 pupils, and a somewhat petty programme:

Counterpoint and fugue, harmony, *solfeggio* and theory; vocalization and singing; piano, organ, all the instruments of the classic orchestra, trombone, orchestra; Italian.

Meaner still, and also incomplete, seems to be that of the Conservatory in Buenos Ayres (Argentine Republic), which does not include more than 12 professors and 6 assistants. They give prizes, however, consisting of medals and little sums of money, even diplomas of teaching.

Harmony and composition, *solfeggio;* singing; piano, harmonium, violin, viola, violoncello, flute; history and æsthetics of music.

Finally, we must point out the existence in Australia of the little Conservatory of Sydney (1894),

founded by a committee of patronage, where I find several names of artist friends, of great excellence. Here the entrance fee varies from 6 shillings to 1 pound 1 shilling, and they do not hesitate to offer to the pupils a Grand Diploma of Merit,— . . . probably relative enough.

Orchestration, counterpoint, fugue, harmony, theory, *solfeggio ;* singing, piano, violin, violoncello, reading both instrumental and vocal.

Doubtless there exist, in South America and even in Australia, establishments that are of more importance and organized with more advanced ideas; but we must limit ourselves; and, moreover, it is not likely that their knowledge would bring to our study any new elements. We can then stop here, without scruple, considering the end pursued. I regret, however, very greatly, that I have no information regarding Canada.

In looking over them superficially, it is natural that these various programmes should appear very much alike, offering very slight differences; we must regret, however, those in which we see figuring beside serious studies those of the Banjo, the Drum, the Xylophone, the Bells, and the Cithara,—instruments which, although occasionally utilized by composers for picturesque reasons, as are also the Castanets and the Crotales, in pieces of a descriptive nature, and consequently exceptional pieces, are nothing more than simple toys, which any pupil can learn to handle alone while amusing himself during the

months of vacation. These are not like the Guitar and Cembalo, for example, national instruments of Spain and Hungary, which give us pleasure to see holding an honourable place in the programmes of study in Barcelona and Budapest, where their absence would make a regrettable gap.

The real interest, as we have already said, regarding European schools, is in studying the regulations of each one, in penetrating into the spirit without attaching too much importance to the letter and thereby gathering its value and tendencies, in order to become capable of judging what degree of confidence these (or others) are worthy to inspire.

It is thus that everybody with the help of the considerations of every kind that are set forth in this last chapter, the numerous documents accumulated here, and the special advice on every case contained in the preceding chapters, will be able to discern with freedom and certainty what opportunity there is for him in whatever place and under whatever circumstances he may find himself, and to choose between the different methods of *Individual Instruction*, *Instruction in Classes*, or *Instruction by the Conservatories*, and also how to obtain the most certain, best and the most artistic results according to the end desired, which is the sole object of this book.

I believe (and I hope I am not mistaken) that I have neglected nothing that is of interest to those who have to consider *Musical Education* seriously, that is to say teachers and parents, as well as what may be useful to the pupils themselves outside of

direct teaching, with the exception of one last point which seems to me to possess much more interest than anyone dreams of: it is that of the *Vacation*, the employment or non-employment of the vacation.

Few persons, in reality, apart from those who make teaching the object of their permanent care and sustained observation, can realize exactly how much a pupil can manage to forget during three months of complete mental inactivity and a total separation from the habitual subject of his daily occupations.

Now, in all schools, *Lycées*, Colleges and other institutions for general instruction, as well as those that look, like the Conservatories, towards a special goal, there are annual vacations, which last about three months. Moreover, in the course of the academic year, there are holidays of several days, at Easter, the New Year, etc.

It will be readily believed that I, the sworn enemy of overwork, am not hostile to holidays and to the general stoppage; on the contrary, I regard them as being the best opportunity and the most propitious moment for travelling, that is to say, for self-instruction by distraction. I consider them useful and indispensable. It is for this reason that I should strongly disapprove of a pupil who, having worked nearly normally and as he should have done during the academic year, should propose, through excessive ardour, not to take advantage of the rest and should wish to pursue his work as usual. This would be absolutely senseless. Particularly in the case of a child or a youth, the mind should not be kept perpetually

on the same ideas; and these seasons of rest constitute wise measures.

But all exaggeration is faulty, and no watchful teacher has failed to observe, particularly in all that concerns art-studies, that on returning after the vacation the pupils have lost something of their acquired skill, and that several weeks of work are necessary before they get back to the point they had reached before the interruption. This is to be noticed not only in the study of singing, or of an instrument, matters which always partake somewhat of the quality of gymnastics, but quite as much in the purely intellectual and mental studies of harmony, counterpoint and everything that touches composition. The mind has lost something of its suppleness, and a certain period of training is necessary, just like the mechanical side, to recover in their plenitude those faculties that were developed in the study before. Here then is another rock upon which people must frequently strike.

Both of these can be easily avoided by inducing oneself, without allowing it to harm the needed rest, to consecrate *one hour* a day, not more, to keeping in good condition. This is always feasible, with a little good-will, even while travelling, and still better if sojourning in the country. An instrumentalist can employ this hour simply in playing scales and exercises; a harmonist or a fuguist, in reading treatises or solving a few short problems on paper; as for the singer, half an hour of vocalization will suffice to keep his voice from getting rusty. There should

not be a total interruption; it is a great mistake to imagine that, in severing ourselves entirely from music for two or three months, we can return to it afterwards with still more ardour and profit. This is false reasoning, which can be held by those only who do not possess a love for the art, but make music as they would make boots. As for the others, those who have the souls of artists, it will be a genuine satisfaction to realize that, while not trying to make any progress, since this is a period of rest, they are not losing ground, that they are sleeping on the field they have won, and that when the time comes, they will take up the march forward at the point where it was interrupted. This is the truly intelligent way of regarding vacations, and this does not prevent them in the least from producing the effect of relaxation and recreation that we have the right to expect from them.

And now, let us briefly recapitulate:

All that belongs to music considered as a *Language* is best learned by frequenting the society of those who know how to speak it, and by rubbing against others who study it; it cannot be learned too young.

All that belongs to music considered as an *Art* is best learned by contemplation and by all that can elevate the mind, by literary studies, travel and contact with great artists; virtuosity, whether vocal or instrumental, demands quiet but prolonged toil.

All that belongs to music considered as a *Science* is best learned by observation and reflection, by the

analytical and deep study of the musical civilizations of the past; one is fitted for this at any age.

*Teaching in classes* seems to be the best for all the elementary and infantile studies, and then for everything connected with theory, even the highest.

*Individual Teaching* is preferable for the student of Singing and Instruments.

*Teaching in the large Conservatories* has the advantages of both.

With regard to the normal duration of the studies, it is as variable as aptitude and temperament, but the studies must be long if we want them to be good. This Art being infinite, it is the same as with every other form of artistic study, and the excellent Schumann, whom I quote here for the last time with regret, expresses a high philosophical truth when he says: "One never stops learning."

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FINIS

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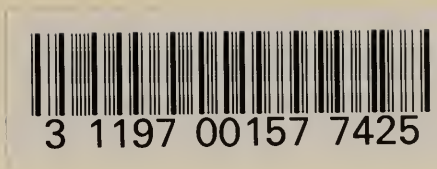
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